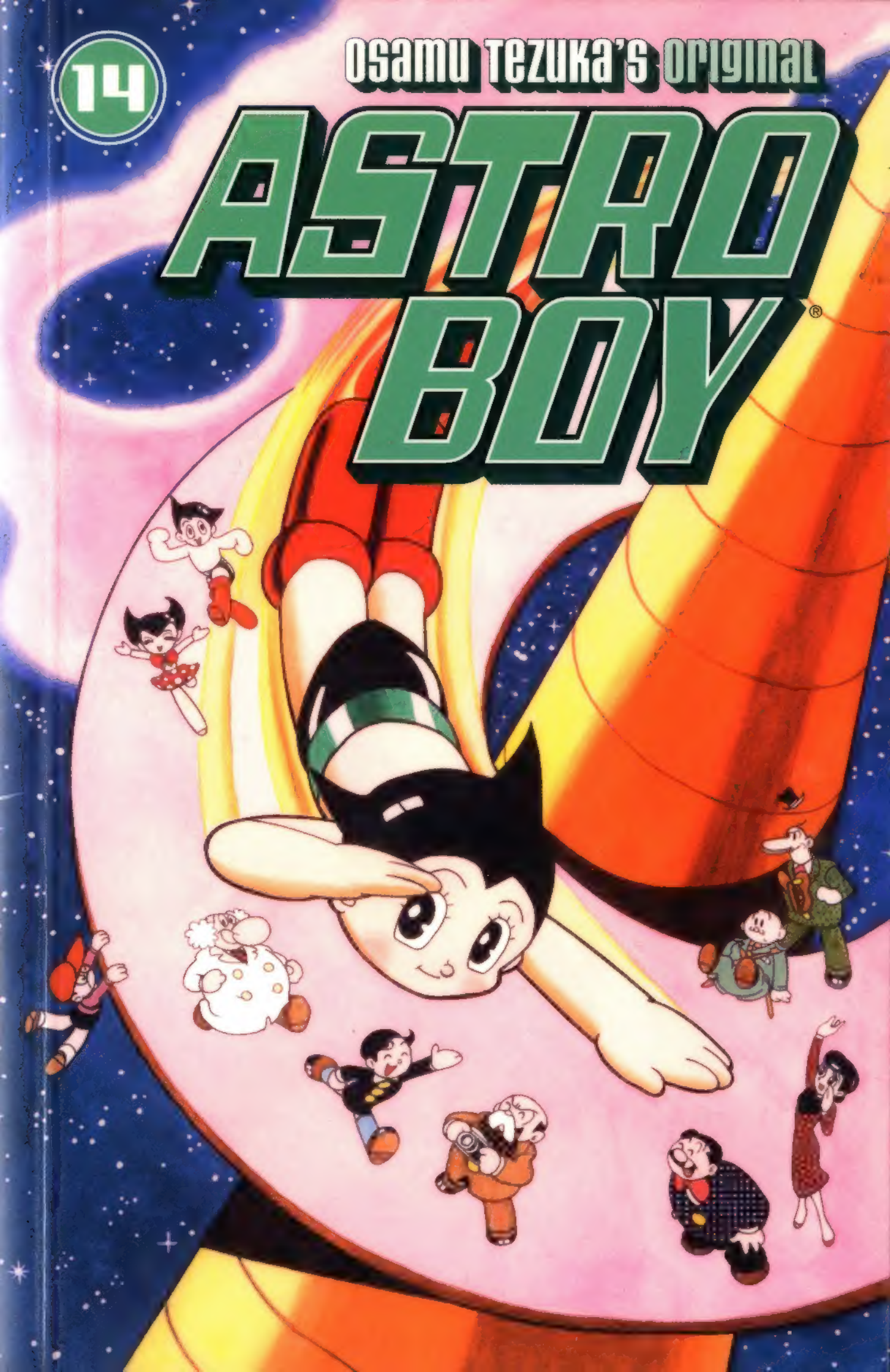
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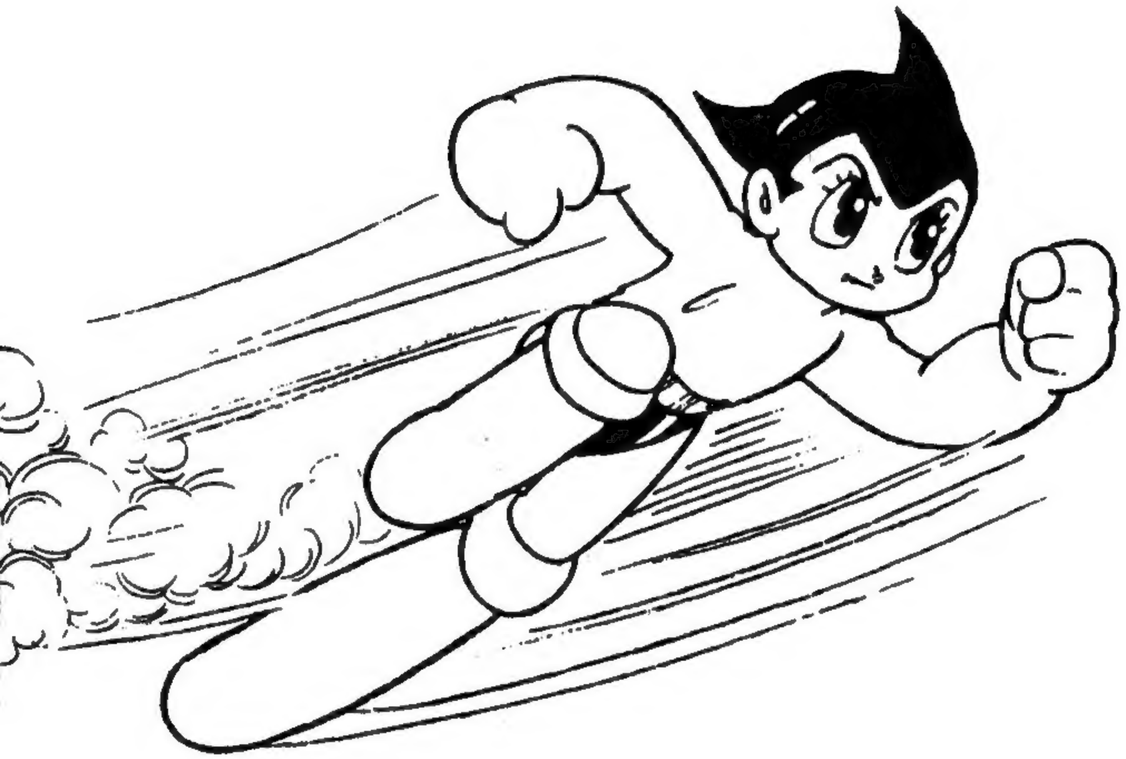
Osamu Tezuka's Original
ASTRO BOY®



ASTRO BOY

14

by

Osamu Tezuka

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THE WHITE-HOT BEING

First serialized from January to March 1961
in *Shonen* magazine.

LOOKIT, ASTRO! THEY'RE MAKING A ROBOT MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU!

WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL ROBOT

CURRENTLY BEING MANUFACTURED AT DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY.

A robot commissioned by Mr. Gaston, of the Sutton Republic, is currently being manufactured at the Ministry of Science's department of precision machinery. With over 500,000 horsepower, it will likely be the world's most powerful ....

THEY SAY HE'S CALLED *BRON-X*, COBALT...

SAY, ASTRO...

YES, COBALT?

AREN'T YOU BOTHERED BY THE IDEA OF A ROBOT *STRONGER* THAN YOU?

NAW, NOT AT ALL...

IT'S BEEN OVER TEN YEARS SINCE I WAS BORN HERE AT THE MINISTRY...

SO IT'S ABOUT TIME SOMEBODY MAKES *SOMETHING* MORE POWERFUL...

B-BUT IF YOU HAD TO FIGHT HIM, ASTRO, YOU'D *LOSE*...

.....
.....

WHAT THE --?!

!

HMM...

HI, PROFES-SOR...

ASTRO! COBALT! GREAT TO SEE YOU BOTH!

WE PASSED SOME STRANGE GUY IN THE HALL, PRO-FESSOR... WHO IS HE?

THAT'S *MR. GASTON*, ASTRO... HE'S THE MAN WHO ORDERED THE ROBOT, *BRON-X*...

I SENSE HE'S A *BAD PERSON*, PROFES-SOR...

HA HA HA... DON'T WORRY, ASTRO...

SO IS BRON-X FINISHED? CAN I SEE HIM?

HA HA HA... I CAN TELL YOU'RE WORRIED... WE'RE STILL IN THE FINAL STAGES OF THE PROJECT...

YOU CAN TAKE A LOOK AT HIM INSIDE THERE, BUT BE CAREFUL... IT'S TOO DANGEROUS FOR ME TO GET NEAR HIM...

VOOM

WOW... WHAT A BLAST OF HEAT!

FSSSSS

FSSSHHH

FSHHH

WOW...!

MY CLOTHES'RE SO HOT...

...I'M ON *FIRE* !!

LET'S GET *OUT OF HERE!*

...INTO SOME *WATER!*

KERSPLASH

WHAT HAPPENED, ASTRO...? YOUR CLOTHES CATCH ON FIRE?

YOU'RE A ROBOT, SO YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL HOT...

MY BODY'S FINE, BUT THE BRAND NEW CLOTHES I PUT ON THIS MORNING AREN'T...

BY THE WAY, PROFESSOR, HOW COME THAT ROBOT DOESN'T HAVE A *HEAD?*

HEAD? OH, THAT'S BECAUSE WE'RE STILL *MAKING* IT...

WE'RE BUILDING IT IN A SEPARATE PLACE... C'MON, I'LL SHOW YOU...

THIS IS THE HEAD?!

IT'S SO MUCH *SMALLER* THAN THE BODY I SAW EARLIER!

IT'LL NEVER FIT, PROFES-SOR...

HA HA... I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU SO *NEGATIVE* BEFORE, ASTRO...

NO MATTER HOW BIG A ROBOT'S BODY IS, ALL YOU NEED FOR THE BRAIN IS A BUNCH OF TRANSISTORS...

BESIDES, WE BUILT THIS THING EXTRA SMALL TO *TEST* IT...

FOR THE TEST, WE'LL PUT THE HEAD ON THIS BODY...

CAN I TRY 'N PUT IT ON?

NOPE...

GOSH, I'D LOVE TO PUT IT ON HIM, ASTRO...

HEY, ASTRO... THE PROFESSOR'S GONE... LET'S TRY IT!

NO, CO-BALT!

WHAT'S A MATTER, ASTRO? DON'T YOU WANNA FIND OUT HOW STRONG BRON-X *REALLY* IS?

KNOCK IT OFF, CO-BALT !!

C'MON, ASTRO... IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, YOU CAN BLAME IT ON ME....

I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS...

CREAK

CHAK

ESSST

LOOK! IT'S STARTED TO GLOW!

FLASH

HELP! IT'S *BLIND-ING!*

FLASH

HELP, ASTRO! I CAN'T SEE!!

YOU'RE A ROBOT, COBALT, YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE BLINDED....

WAIT A SEC!... *I CAN'T SEE EITHER!*

THIS IS *TERRI-BLE...*

GWA HA HA! WELL... IF IT ISN'T ASTRO AND HIS BROTHER COBALT!

UNGH?!?

YOU WANTED TO SEE HOW MUCH POWER I HAVE, RIGHT?! *HA HA HA!*

THIS GUY CAN ACTUALLY *TALK!* BUT HOW'D HE KNOW MY NAME?

YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING HOW I KNOW YOUR NAMES...

C-CAN YOU READ MY MIND?

I CAN READ *ANYONE'S* MIND....

WHERE'S THIS GUY'S VOICE COMING FROM, ANYWAY...?

I KNOW *EXACTLY* WHAT YOU'RE WONDERING, ROBOT...

I AM SPEAKING STRAIGHT INTO YOUR *MIND!!*

WHAT THE --P!

GWA HA HA!! YOU PITIFUL ROBOT... YOU WANTED TO SEE WHAT SORT OF CREATURE I AM, DIDN'T YOU?

CREATURE? WHAD'YOU MEAN!? YOU'RE A ROBOT, TOO!

ME? A *ROBOT?! GWA HA HA HA!*

I AM *MORE* THAN ROBOT!

I'VE HEARD *ENOUGH!!*

SMASH

ZAP *ZAP*

ARGH!

ONE MORE TRY!!

FSSSSH *FSSSST*

I SHALL DEFEAT *ALL* ROBOTS! AND *ALL* HUMANS, TOO!! LIKE *THIS!*

PROFESSOR! *HELP US!!*

WHAT IS IT, COBALT?

WHA?! SOMEBODY ACTIVATED BRON-X!!?

KACHUNK

FOOLS! WHY'D YOU DO THIS?!

I *NEVER* GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO START HIM, ASTRO! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT!

FSSH

I'LL FORGIVE YOU THIS TIME, BUT GET OUT OF HERE!

FOOLING AROUND WITH BRON-X'LL GET YOU GUYS INTO *BIG TROUBLE*, UNDERSTAND!?

HMPH. GUESS I'VE GOT NO CHOICE NOW BUT TO TELL YOU, DO I...? IT'S LIKE THIS...

THERE'S A PEAK CALLED *"BRON"* IN THE RUWENZORI MOUNTAINS IN AFRICA...

I'M SORRY, PROFESSOR... BUT YOU'VE GOTTA TELL US... WHAT IS BRON-X? A *ROBOT?* OR SOMETHING *ELSE?*

BOMP BOPPITY BOMP TWEET BOMP GASTON

"IT WAS DISCOVERED BY AN EXPLORER NAMED *GASTON...*"

BOMP BOPPITY GASTON

WHAT THE-?!

WHOA!

WE'VE COME TO A STRANGE CLEARING, MEN!

MIGHT BE AN OLD ELEPHANT GATHERING GROUNDS...

WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S *ANCIENT...*

SURE IS STRANGE, BOSS... NOT A BLADE OF GRASS GROWING HERE...

WAIT A MINUTE...

SCRABBLE

LOOK!

THIS LOOKS LIKE A *TEC-TITE!*

A TEC-TITE?

YEAH, WHAT'S THAT?

TECTITES ARE ROCKS FOUND ALL OVER THE EARTH, BUT NO ONE REALLY KNOWS MUCH ABOUT THEM... SOME SCIENTISTS SAY *SPACEMEN* BROUGHT THEM HERE IN ANCIENT TIMES... THEY SAY THEY'RE *ALIEN MINERALS!*

EVERYBODY SEARCH AROUND HERE! THERE MIGHT BE *MORE* OF THESE THINGS!

I FOUND ONE HERE!

ME, TOO!

SO THAT'S WHEN THEY REALIZED THE WHOLE CLEARING WAS MADE OF TECTITES, ASTRO!

"TO GASTON'S AMAZEMENT, THE MEN UNCOVERED..."

...A *FLYING SAUCER !!*

KEEP DIGGING, MEN!

"IT WAS JUST AS GASTON HAD SUS-PECTED ..."

"A FLYING SAUCER HAD APPARENTLY CRASHED ON THE SITE YEARS AGO..."

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT... THIS IS AN *ALIEN* SHIP!

WE'VE UNCOVERED SOMETHING REALLY BIG HERE, MEN...

MR. GASTON, SIR! I FOUND SOMETHING WITH STRANGE *WRITING!*

LET ME SEE ...

WELL, I'LL BE....

YAHOOO!

HOOO-RAAA-AY!

YIKES!

HEY! DON'T LEAVE! *COME BACK!*

YOU SEE, ASTRO... IT WAS THE *BLUEPRINTS* FOR AN *ALIEN ROBOT!*

"GASTON WAS TERRIBLY EXCITED..." "... AND HE LEFT THE SITE IN HIGH SPIRITS..."

"BUT IN ROBOTICS MINISTRIES AROUND THE WORLD..."

"...NO ONE COULD BUILD A ROBOT BASED ON THE BLUEPRINTS..."

"...SO THAT'S WHAT BROUGHT MR. GASTON TO *US*, TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY..."

HE KNEW WE HAD EXPERIENCE CREATING ADVANCED ROBOTS LIKE YOU, ASTRO...

SO THIS FELLA HERE REPRESENTS THE EFFORTS OF THE BEST ROBOTICISTS IN ALL JAPAN...

SO THIS IS AN *ALIEN* ROBOT... TOTALLY DIFFERENT THAN WE ARE...

SO *THAT'S* IT...

THIS HAS GOT TO *STOP!*

THIS THING'S NO FRIEND OF HUMANS, PROFESSOR!

IT'S HERE TO *CONQUER EARTH!!*

HA HA! YOU MUST BE *JOKING*, ASTRO!

ROBOTS ARE MADE TO *SERVE HUMANS....*

NO, PROFESSOR.... NOT *THIS* ONE!

HIS MASTER'S AN *ALIEN!* AND HE'S MAKING *FOOLS* OF US!!

B-BUT WHERE'S THE PROOF, ASTRO?

HE TOLD ME DIRECTLY! HE SPOKE RIGHT TO MY MIND...

YOUR MIND?

THERE'S NO WAY A ROBOT COULD DO THAT!

YOU'RE *SURE* HE SPOKE TO YOU? HE NEVER SAID ANYTHING TO ME...

THAT'S 'CUZ HE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO HUMANS YET!

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!

BUT IT'S *TRUE*, PROFESSOR! I DON'T LIE!

I'M *BEGGING* YOU... *DON'T* COMPLETE HIM!

PLEASE DON'T, PROFESSOR...

BUT WHAT'LL MR. GASTON SAY?

I'LL GO TALK TO HIM!!

NO! STOP, ASTRO! YOU MUSTN'T TELL HIM WHAT I'VE TOLD YOU!!

YOU UNDERSTAND, ASTRO?!!

YES-SIR...

ZAP

ZAP

ZAP

BAM

BAM

WELL, PROFESSOR... HOW'S IT GOING?

AH, *MR. GASTON*...

WE'VE FINISHED THE TORSO...

LOOKS GOOD, LOOKS GOOD...

WE'LL NEED ANOTHER MONTH TO FINISH THE HEAD...

I MUST SAY, JAPANESE ROBOT SCIENCE IS BY FAR THE BEST...

WHAT KIND WORDS!

IF THE ALIENS SHOULD LEARN OF THIS...

...THEY MIGHT BE A BIT UPSET... BUT I LEAVE IT UTO YOU, PROFESSOR...

ONE MORE MONTH...

HEY, YOU HEAR? THEY'RE GONNA FINISH BRON-X IN ANOTHER MONTH!

SURE WOULD BE FUN TO SEE ASTRO SLUG IT OUT WITH HIM...

YOU HEARD ABOUT THIS BRON-X ROBOT, ASTRO?

YEAH...

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU SURE IS AMAZING...

G'NITE MOM!

G'NITE, DEARS ...

BEEP BEEP BEEP

ZZZZ ZZZZ

HMPH...

SORRY TO DO THIS TO YOU, MOM 'N DAD...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER BEEN A THIEF...

I KNOW I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO DO THIS, BUT IT'S FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANS...

WOOSH

KA CHAK

THIS IS THE PLACE...

CREAK

BZZT

BZZLZT

IF I HIDE THE HEAD, NOBODY'LL BE ABLE TO ASSEMBLE BRON-X!

BRRIIINGGGGG

YIKES! I'VE BEEN DETECTED!

BRRIINNNGGGG

RINGGGG

RRRRIINNNNNGGG BRINNNNGGGG

TRAMP TRAMP

STOP! THIEF!

DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY! HE'S STOLEN SOMETHING!

IT'S A ROBOT! SHOOT HIM DOWN!

BUAM BUAM BUAM BUAM

ZING ZING PLINK

LOWER ALL SHUTTERS! DON'T LET HIM OUT!

CREAK CREAK

SMASH

WOW... THAT'S THE SORT OF STUFF ASTRO BOY DOES!

MAYBE IT IS ASTRO BOY!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! ASTRO'D NEVER STEAL ANYTHING!

SMASH

YIKES! IT IS ASTRO!

ZOOM

I GOT A PHOTO OF HIM!

CLICK

UH, OH...

I'M RUINED! THEY KNOW IT'S ME!

BUAM BUAM BUAM BUAM BUAM

AFTER THIS, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO GO HOME...

GOTTA FIND SOMEPLACE TO HIDE THIS THING...

WHAT?! ASTRO STOLE BRON-X'S *HEAD*?!!

WELL, WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?! *EH*?!

AND AS FOR THE POLICE... WHAT ON EARTH WERE YOU THINKING...

...LEAVING A *DANGEROUS* ROBOT *UN-GUARDED*!?

EH?

W-WE NEVER DREAMED ASTRO'D DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

ALL I CAN THINK IS THAT ASTRO PROB'LY STOLE IT BECAUSE HE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE A ROBOT MORE POWERFUL THAN HIM...

EXACT-LY!

NOW YOU'RE TALKING!

BRRRRING

'ELLO? NAKAMURA HERE, CHIEF OF INVESTIGATIONS, SECTION 2...

I SEE... NO SIGN OF HIM YET, *EH*...

THERE'S APPARENTLY NO TRACE OF ASTRO YET...

I'VE HAD ENOUGH!

IF THE POLICE CAN'T FIND HIM...

...I'LL HAVE TO TAKE MATTERS INTO MY *OWN* HANDS!

WHA--?

I'LL HAVE THE BRON-X *BODY* SEARCH FOR ITS OWN HEAD!

B-BUT THAT'S TOO DANGEROUS!!

DANGEROUS?! WHY? A ROBOT WITHOUT A HEAD'S JUST A MECHANICAL DOLL...

AND BESIDES, HIS BODY'S DESIGNED TO KNOW WHERE THE HEAD IS, USING RADIO WAVES... HE'LL FIND IT RIGHT AWAY...

AND MOREOVER, BRON-X'S *STRONGER* THAN ASTRO!!

FSSSH FSSSH

W-W-WHAT A *SCARY* ROBOT...

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

A ROBOT WITHOUT A HEAD'S JUST A MECHANICAL DOLL!

NO NEED TO WORRY!!

AOORAHH

HEH HEH... YOU WANT YOUR HEAD, RIGHT? WELL, GO GET IT FROM ASTRO BOY! *HE'S* GOT IT!

W-WAIT!! D-DON'T LET HIM WALK AROUND IN THE MINISTRY!!

SMASH

CRASH

CRUMBLE

THERE IS A TINY ISLAND, KNOWN AS *HORAGASHIMA*, IN THE FAR SOUTHERN REACHES OF JAPAN. EVEN THOUGH IT IS SO ISOLATED THAT BIRDS RARELY VISIT, IT NONETHELESS HAS HUMAN INHABITANTS...

ROAR ROAR

IF I BURY BRON-X'S HEAD HERE, NO ONE'LL *EVER* FIND IT...

SPLOOSH SPLASH

HMPH...

I GUESS I REALLY AM A BAD ROBOT NOW.... I'VE STOLEN SOMETHING, AND BURIED IT, TOO...

I BET THEY'RE REALLY UPSET BACK IN TOKYO...

...BUT I DID THIS FOR THE SAKE OF *HUMANS*...

UH OH...

SCREEEE

SOMETHING'S FLYING THIS WAY...

SCREEE

UH OH! IT'S BRON-X'S BODY!!

CRACK

FRRRRP

CRASH

ZU ZU ZUZU ZUZU

I BET YOU'RE HERE FOR YOUR HEAD, BRON-X!

ZUAAAA!

WELL, JUST TRY'N GET IT FROM ME!!

HMM... I BET HE CAN'T MOVE NORMALLY WITHOUT HIS HEAD....

ROAAAAAA

WITHOUT A HEAD, THIS GUY'S NOT SCARY AT ALL...

KATHUD

UH OH... THE GRASS IS BURNING AROUND HIM!

I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE HUGE HEAT HE GIVES OFF!

KNOCK IT OFF, BRON-X! THE MORE YOU STRUGGLE, THE MORE THINGS'LL GO UP IN FLAMES!

MAYBE YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING I SAY 'CUZ YOU DON'T HAVE A HEAD...

WHOOPS!

CHAK

ARGH...

HALP! STOP! YOU'RE GONNA *MELT* ME!

FSSSH

UNGH...

FWP

TAKE *THIS*, BRON-X!

RATATATAT

GAKKIII!

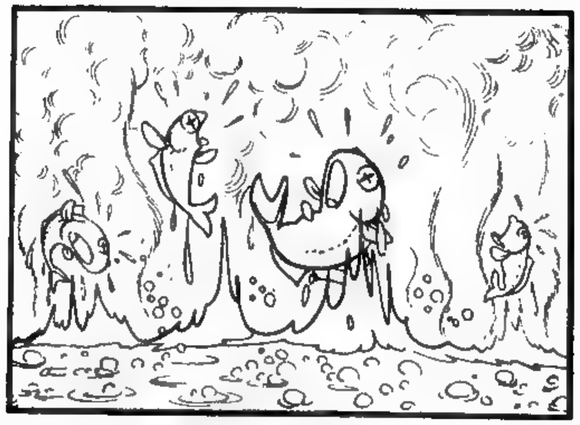
GAWA GA!

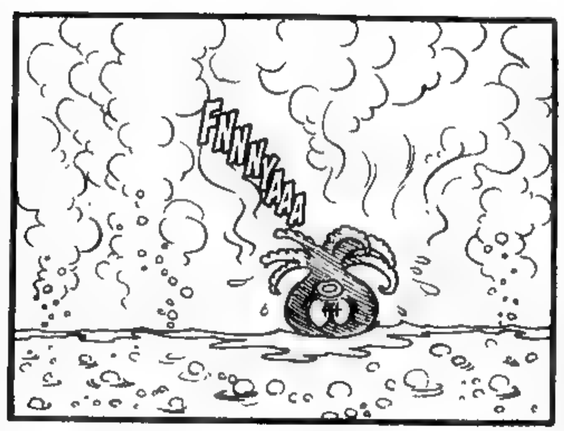
KERSPLOOSH

FSSHHH

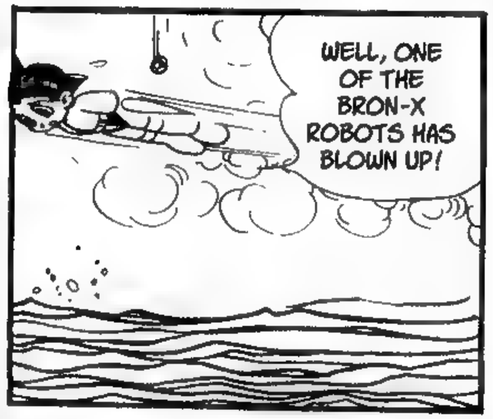
FSSSHU

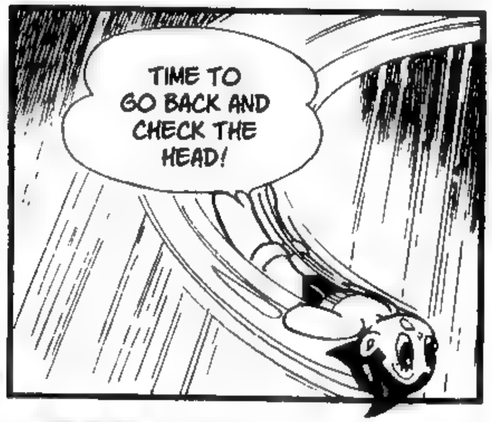
FSSSST

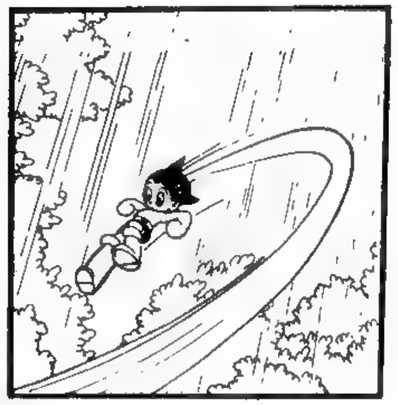



FNNNSHH

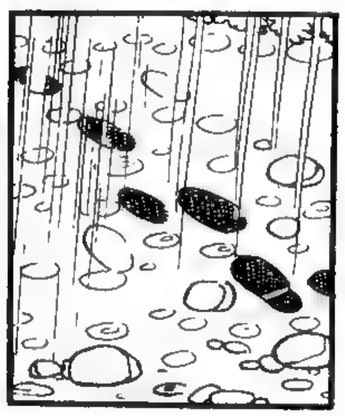
KA
BOOM!!

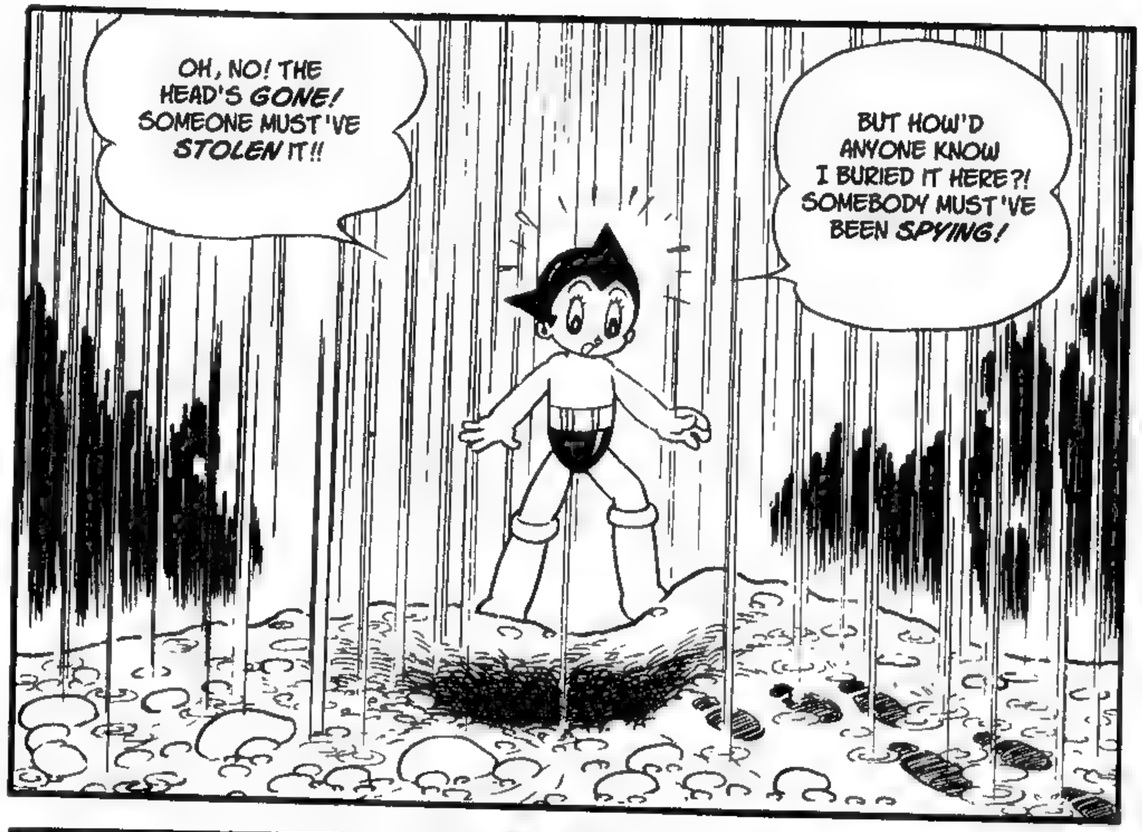

WELL, ONE OF THE BRON-X ROBOTS HAS BLOWN UP!


TIME TO GO BACK AND CHECK THE HEAD!

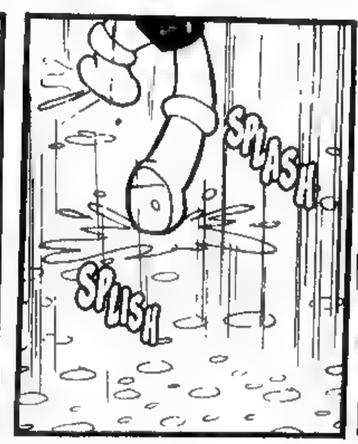


HMM... LOOKS LIKE FOOTPRINTS !!




OH, NO! THE HEAD'S GONE! SOMEONE MUST'VE STOLEN IT!!
BUT HOW'D ANYONE KNOW I BURIED IT HERE?! SOMEBODY MUST'VE BEEN SPYING!

THE FOOTPRINTS LEAD IN THAT DIRECTION...


SPLASH
SPLISH

A VILLAGE!!

WHAT A RUN-DOWN PLACE!

WONDER IF ANYONE EVEN LIVES AROUND HERE...

NO WONDER IT'S SO DARK!

THEY DON'T HAVE *ELEC-TRICITY* HERE!

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THERE'S STILL PLACES LIKE THIS IN 21ST CENTURY JAPAN!

THAT'S ODD...

THERE'S A FAINT LIGHT COMING FROM THAT PLACE...

UH OH! IT'S A *FIRE!*

FWAP FWAP

AIEEE!

SHOICHI!! WHAT'RE YOU DOING, BOY?!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

YOU BEEN BURNING SUM'THING, BOY?

WELL, I'LL BE! YER CLOTHES'RE ALL CHARRED, BOY!

WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU, SON? WATCHER BEEN DOIN'?

TALK TO ME!

YOU TRYIN' TO THROW ME FOR A LOOP?!

MAMA DON'T LIKE BOYS WHO HIDE STUFF FROM HER, UNNERSTAN'?

WAIT, MOM! WAIT!

MOISTURIZER TREATMENT

OKAY, SO SHOW ME...

HOKAY...

SCRABBLE

FOOMP

W-WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS, SHOICHI? W-WHERE'D YOU *FIND* THIS THING?!

IN THE CLEARING BY THE SEA...

OUR VILLAGE IS SO DARK AT NIGHT I CAN'T EVEN DO MY HOMEWORK, MAMA... SO I THOUGHT MAYBE I COULD USE THIS TO READ BY, Y'KNOW...

NO, YOU GOTTA TAKE IT BACK, SHOICHI! RIGHT NOW, UNNERSTAN'?!

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT IS!

B-BUT MAMA... *PLEASE....*

WELL, IF THAT'S THE CASE, I'LL GO TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL 'N TELL 'EM WE'VE GOT A *MONSTER* HERE!

WAIT, MAMA! *WAIT!*

DON'T LEAVE ME, MAMA!

PLEASE, STOP!

THAT HEAD'S NOT REALLY A MONSTER, LADY...

'N WHO'RE YOU?

I'M THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THAT HEAD HERE, LADY...

YOU *WHAT?!*

IT... IT BELONGS TO *YOU?!*

I SLIPPED, MAMA!

IT'S A ROBOT'S HEAD, MA'AM...

A *WHA?!*

A... A *ROBOT'S?*

YES, 'N I'D LIKE TO GIVE IT TO YOUR BOY, SHOICHI...

WAAH! NOW I DON' WAN' IT, MAMA!!

HALP

HALP!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN TOKYO, JUST AS THE SEARCH FOR ASTRO WAS REALLY HEATING UP, A VERY, VERY, VERY ODD MAN MADE A SUDDEN APPEARANCE. HE WAS KNOWN AS *"LANKY" NOPPO...*

BUT NO ONE KNEW WHO NOPPO WAS OR WHERE OR WHY HE HAD COME TO TOKYO....

WOW! LOOK HOW TALL THAT GUY IS!

HE'S EVEN TALL FOR A FOREIGNER!

EXCUSE ME, SIR....

MIND BENDING DOWN? YER SO TALL I CAN HARDLY HEAR YOU!

'SCUSE ME... I FORGOT ABOUT MY HEIGHT...

I'M ACTUALLY LOOKING FOR A FOREIGNER NAMED *GASTON*....

HM... GASTON?

GASTON?

SORRY, BUT THAT'S NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION TO GO ON...

EGADS, WHAT AN INCONVENIENT PLACE JAPAN IS!

I NEED TO KNOW SOMETHING ELSE, LIKE WHERE HE WORKS OR HIS OCCUPATION...

WELL, HE HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH ROBOTS!

IF THAT'S THE CASE, MISTER, YOU SHOULD ASK AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, SIR....

GASTON...

GASTON ...

IT'S BEEN A WHOLE MONTH...

...AND WE *STILL* DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE ASTRO IS!!

NOT ONLY THAT, NO ONE'S EVEN SPOTTED BRON-X, WHO'S BIG ENOUGH TO STICK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB....

IT IS STRANGE, I ADMIT...

S'CUSE ME... DID YOU SAY *BRON-X* ?

YOW... WHO'RE YOU? DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!

CAN YOU JUST TELL ME WHERE HE IS?

Y-YOU MEAN YOU *KNOW* BRON-X?!

NO, I JUST WANT TO *MEET* HIM!

AW... YER OF NO USE TO US, THEN!

B-BUT WAIT A MINUTE! HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM?!!

HEY, HE DISAP-PEARED!!

WAIT A MINUTE... HE DROPPED A NAME CARD!

LANKY NOPPO C.P. CLUB

HMM... NEVER HEARD OF HIM...

RATS! HE MIGHT'VE BEEN ABLE TO TELL US SOMETHING IMPORT-ANT!

SLAM

YOU'RE ALL USELESS IDIOTS!!

WHAT'S WITH THE JAPANESE POLICE, STANDING AROUND 'N DOING NOTHING?!

HOW CAN YOU EVEN CALL YOURSELVES POLICE!?

GOSH... HE DOESN'T HAVE TO GET THAT WORKED UP ABOUT IT...

∋HMPH∈.... GOTTA SPEAK MY MIND ONCE IN AWHILE....

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU! I WANT TO HAVE BRON-X SEARCH FOR HIS HEAD ONE MORE TIME!

ONE MORE TIME?!

RIGHT! HAVE HIM SEARCH ONE MORE TIME!

B-BUT WE ALREADY SENT HIM OUT!

AHH, BUT THERE'S ANOTHER BRON-X, RIGHT?!

FOR TEST PURPOSES... RIGHT?

A BRON-X FOR TEST PUR-POSES?

B-BUT A TEST VERSION CAN'T...

I DON'T CARE... JUST USE THE TEST VERSION...

WHAT'S THE MATTER, PROFESSOR?

...YOU SEEM SO UNENTHUSIASTIC...

I BET I KNOW WHY! YOU DON'T WANT TO FIND ASTRO NOW, DO YOU?!

.....
.....

WHY, OCHANOMIZU? WHY?!

BECAUSE I WANNA BELIEVE ASTRO, THAT'S WHY! I JUST KNOW HE'S A GOOD KID!

ENOUGH PRATTLE, OCHANOMIZU!

JUST HAVE BRON-X FIND HIM!

NO NEED TO GET SO ANGRY, MR. GASTON!

BRON-X ...

... HAS ALREADY TAKEN OFF...

WHA?!

JUST AS YOU WISHED, HE HAS TAKEN OFF TO SEARCH FOR THE HEAD....

B-B-BUT WHO LET HIM?!

WHY, ME, OF COURSE!

HA HA HA HA

WHAT?!

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!

THAT SCOUNDREL WASN'T KIDDING!

VROOOOM

THERE BRON-X GOES!

WELL? ARE YOU CONVINCED?

YES... B-BUT WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?!

ME? AH, I AM LANKY NOPPO, OF THE C.P. CLUB....

LANKY NOPPO?!

YES... AND PLEASE EXCUSE ME...

NO NEED TO BE SO SURPRISED, MR. GASTON!

JUST IGNORE ME...

HAALP! HE'S A MONSTER!

WOW! LOOK HOW *BRIGHT* IT IS!

IT'S A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!

JUST KEEPS ON GLOWING!

FLARE

I'M THE VILLAGE ELDER HERE, SONNY, 'N I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH...

WE'VE PETITIONED THE GOVERNMENT OVER 'N OVER AGAIN, BUT THEY *NEVER* BRING ELECTRICITY TO OUR ISLAND!

I'M THE LOCAL TEACHER HERE... TAKE A LOOK AT MY STUDENTS!

THANK YOU, ASTRO-SAN!

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

TANK YA!

WE LOVE ASTRO BOY!!

HOKAY, EV'RYBODY! FOR ALL THIS LIGHT THAT'S BEEN BROUGHT TO OUR DOWN-'N-OUT VILLAGE...

WE HAVE ONLY ONE PERSON TO THANK, 'N THAT'S *ASTRO BOY* HERE!

GOSH, FOLKS... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

GEE, THAT SURE WORKED OUT WELL...

THEY REALLY APPRE-CIATED IT...

SO BRON-X'S HEAD CAME IN HANDY AFTER ALL...

WHA?!

KATHUD

THAT A *METEOR?*

SOUNDS LIKE IT MUST'VE CRASHED BACK IN THE HILLS...

I'D BETTER GO CHECK...

WOW... NOTHING LEFT BUT AN *OUTLINE*.... THIS IS NO METEOR...

WHATEVER IT IS, IT LEFT A HOLE IN THE GROUND IN THE SHAPE OF A *HUMAN*...

UH OH... I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING!

HEY, SHOICHI! SOMETHING STRANGE LANDED BEHIND THE VILLAGE! LET'S GO CHECK IT OUT!

I... I'LL JOIN YOU LATER...

FSSSSH

RUSTLE

HEY, *WHO'S* THERE?

YIKES....

HAAALP!

THAT SOUNDED LIKE *SHOICHI!!*

WHAT HAPPENED, SHOICHI! HANG IN THERE, SON!

WHA?! THE HEAD'S *GONE!!*

I FORGOT ABOUT THE *OTHER* LITTLE TEST BODY MADE FOR BRON-X!

SO, WE MEET AGAIN, ASTRO...

GWA HA HA HA! IT'S *ME!* AND I'M DIRECTLY ADDRESSING YOUR *MIND!!*

FLARE

OH MY GOSH... H-HE PUT THE *HEAD* ON!!

RIGHT... AND *NO ONE* CAN STOP ME NOW!!

THIS'LL GIVE YOU A TASTE OF MY *POWER*, ASTRO!

FLASH

KABOSH

WHY, YOU...

ZAP ZAP ZAP

NEXT TRY *THIS* ON FOR SIZE!

YIKES!

YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS, BRON-X! I WON'T LET YOU! YOU'RE A THREAT TO *ALL MANKIND!*

SLAM

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

WHAP WHUP WHUP WHAP WHUP

WHAP WHUP WHUP WHAP

UH OH... IT'S THE AIR PATROL! NOW I'M *REALLY* IN TROUBLE!

ASTRO! THIS IS *INSPECTOR TAWASHI!* WE'VE FINALLY LOCATED YOU! THERE'S *NO ESCAPE* THIS TIME!

WE'VE NO CHOICE! WE'VE GOTTA TAKE YOU IN, ASTRO! MAKE IT EASIER FOR ALL OF US, AND JUST *SURRENDER!*

I WILL, INSPECTOR NAKAMURA! BUT YOU'VE GOTTA LET ME FINISH OFF BRON-X! *PLEASE!*

ENOUGH NONSENSE, ASTRO! JUST PUT YOUR *HANDS UP!*

...YESSIR....

WHAP
WHUP
WHAP
WHUP

YOU'RE UNDER *ARREST*, ASTRO...

...FOR *STEALING BRON-X'S HEAD!*

YESSIR...

WE HAVE TO TAKE YOU IN... YOU UNDERSTAND?

YESSIR...

I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE SUCH A GOOD KID, ASTRO! WHY'D YOU HAVE TO DO THIS?

GOOD WORK, INSPECTORS! I WANT HIM PUNISHED TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW!

AH, MR. GASTON!

AS LONG AS *THIS* ROBOT'S AROUND, THERE'LL BE NOTHING BUT *TROUBLE!*

WHAP

I EITHER WANT HIM TOTALLY SMASHED OR BOTH HIS ARMS RIPPED OFF!

NOW HOLD ON, MR. GASTON!

SOMEDAY *YOU'RE* GOING TO BE PUNISHED FOR YOUR EVIL PLANS, GASTON, JUST WAIT!

WHY YOU...

WHY YOU *IMPUDENT ROBOT!*

EE-OUCH!

OKAY, BRON-X! YOU WHUP HIM ONE!

PLEASE, MISTER! *STOP!*

WHY SHOULD I? BRON-X IS *MINE, ALL MINE!*

GO AHEAD, BRON-X! *GIVE IT TO HIM!*

KATHUD

WHAT THE--?

EGADS!

WH-WHAT'S THAT *BEHIND* US?!

IT'S A *ROCKET SHIP!*

FSSSSSSHH

WHAT COUNTRY'S IT FROM?

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE, BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING HERE?

I AM *LANKY NOPPO*, OF THE C.P. CLUB, AND BRON-X BELONGS TO *ME* AND *ME* ONLY!

APOLOGIES FOR THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE...

HEY! YOU'RE THE WEIRDO WE SAW BEFORE!

INDEED I AM! AND I'VE COME TO *RETRIEVE BRON-X!*

B-BUT HE BE-LONGS TO *ME!*

HE'S MINE! ALL MINE! AND YOU CAN'T HAVE HIM!

NO! *BRON... BRON...* COME TO *ME!*

PYOKON

BRON-X! STOP!

GOOD BOY! COME TO PAPA!

OPEN FIRE, MEN!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

STOP, GENTLEMEN! YOU'RE JUST *WASTING YOUR BULLETS!*

FIRST, LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY!

THE C.P. CLUB IS A *UNION OF ALIENS!*

LONG AGO, ONE OF OUR SPACE SHIPS CRASHED HERE ON EARTH, AND THE BLUEPRINTS FOR ONE OF OUR ROBOTS FELL INTO HUMAN HANDS...

THAT ROBOT WAS ***BRON-X*** HERE! HE WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR EARTHLINGS, AND HE HAS POWERS ***BEYOND HUMAN COMPREHENSION.*** IF COMPLETED BY HUMANS, ***TERRIBLE THINGS*** COULD HAPPEN!

ASTRO BOY KNEW THIS! THAT'S WHY HE RISKED HIS LIFE TO PREVENT BRON-X FROM BEING BUILT!

SO EXCUSE ME, BUT I INTEND TO TAKE BRON-X ***HOME!***

YOU MUST NOT PUNISH ASTRO BOY, EARTHLINGS! HE HAS ACTED CORRECTLY IN ALL OF THIS!

WAIT, MR. NOPPO! ***WAIT!***

COULDN'T YOU AT LEAST LEAVE BRON-X'S HEAD HERE WITH ME?

THE PEOPLE OF THIS ISLAND DON'T HAVE ANY ***ELECTRICITY...***

THEY COULD USE HIS HEAD TO ***PROVIDE LIGHT!***

WHAT'S THIS? YOU WANT HIS HEAD?!

BRON-X!

BUUUNN

YOUNG ASTRO BOY WANTS YOUR HEAD...

GIVE IT TO HIM, AND I'LL MAKE YOU ANOTHER LATER, OKAY...?

YOU REALLY WANT ME TO GIVE MY HEAD TO AN ***EARTH ROBOT?***

MY PRIDE WILL BE WOUNDED!

IT IS AN ***ORDER,*** BRON-X!

WELL, IF YOU INSIST, SIR...

...BUT PLEASE LET ASTRO AND ME DUEL...

THEN, IF ASTRO WINS, I SHALL GLADLY GIVE HIM MY HEAD!

WELL, ASTRO... WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?

WHOEVER WINS GETS THE OTHER'S HEAD... HOW ABOUT IT?

WELL, ASTRO... WHAT DO YOU SAY? ARE YOU *AFRAID?*

NO!... I'LL DO IT!

HEH HEH HEH... THEN WE'LL FINALLY DUEL TO THE DEATH!

I KNOW YOU'RE EARTH'S BEST ROBOT, SO I EXPECT YOU TO FIGHT VALIANTLY 'TIL THE END!

I'VE GOTTA FIGURE OUT A WAY TO WIN! I'VE GOTTA MAKE SURE THE ISLANDERS GET HIS HEAD!

HERE I COME!

WHAT THE --?

ZOOM

WOOSH

VROOOM

TAKE TO THE SKY, WILL YOU?! YOU COWARD!

OH MY GOSH... LOOK AT THEM!

I'M NOT TRYING TO ESCAPE, BRON-X! THIS IS PART OF MY STRATEGY!

VVROOOOM

I KNOW YOU'D WIN IN A FRONTAL ASSAULT!

STOP! LET ME GET MY HANDS ON YOU!

SLAM

VROOOM

SCREE

NOW I'M REALLY MAD!

I LIKE THAT! KEEP GETTING MAD!!

LET'S HAVE IT OUT IN THIS CLEARING!

SIMPLY CHANGING PLACES WON'T PROTECT YOU FROM MY POWERS, ASTRO BOY!

I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU, BRON-X!

TAKE THIS!

SMASH

KASPLOOSH

SHLA BUB

FSSSH

BUUUN

U UUUU UU

CRACK

POP

SNAP

SHU
SHU

IT'S WORKING! AFTER DIVING INTO THE COLD SEA WATER, HIS WHITE-HOT BODY'S STARING TO CRACK, AND WATER'S POURING IN!

VREEE

FSSSH

HOW D'YOU FEEL NOW, BRON-X? A LITTLE OFF?

THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO BRAG SO MUCH!

NOW FOR A HEAD SMASH!

WOBBLE

BUUUN

CLUNK

KAPOW

WITHOUT YOUR HEAD, YOU'RE ALL MINE!

SMACK

FSSSSHH

CRASH

NOW FOR THE COUP DE GRACE!

KATHUD

KABOOM

WOW! HE REALLY BLEW UP!

WAY TO GO, ASTRO!!

WELL, ASTRO BOY... YOU WIN, SO AS AGREED, THE HEAD IS YOURS! AND WITH THAT, I *BID YOU FAREWELL!*

LOOK, EV'RYBODY!

WE'VE GOT *LIGHT* FOR THE VILLAGE NOW!

HOOORAAAY!

SHOICHI, BABY! EVERYTHING'S *ALL RIGHT NOW!*

LOOK AT THE HEAD ASTRO BOY BROUGHT US!

IT BELONGS TO *OUR ISLAND* NOW!

REALLY, MAMA? YOU MEAN IT WON'T RUN AWAY OR SCARE US ANYMORE!?

YAY FOR ASTRO BOY!

GIVE ME THAT THING, LITTLE ROBOT!

NEVER!

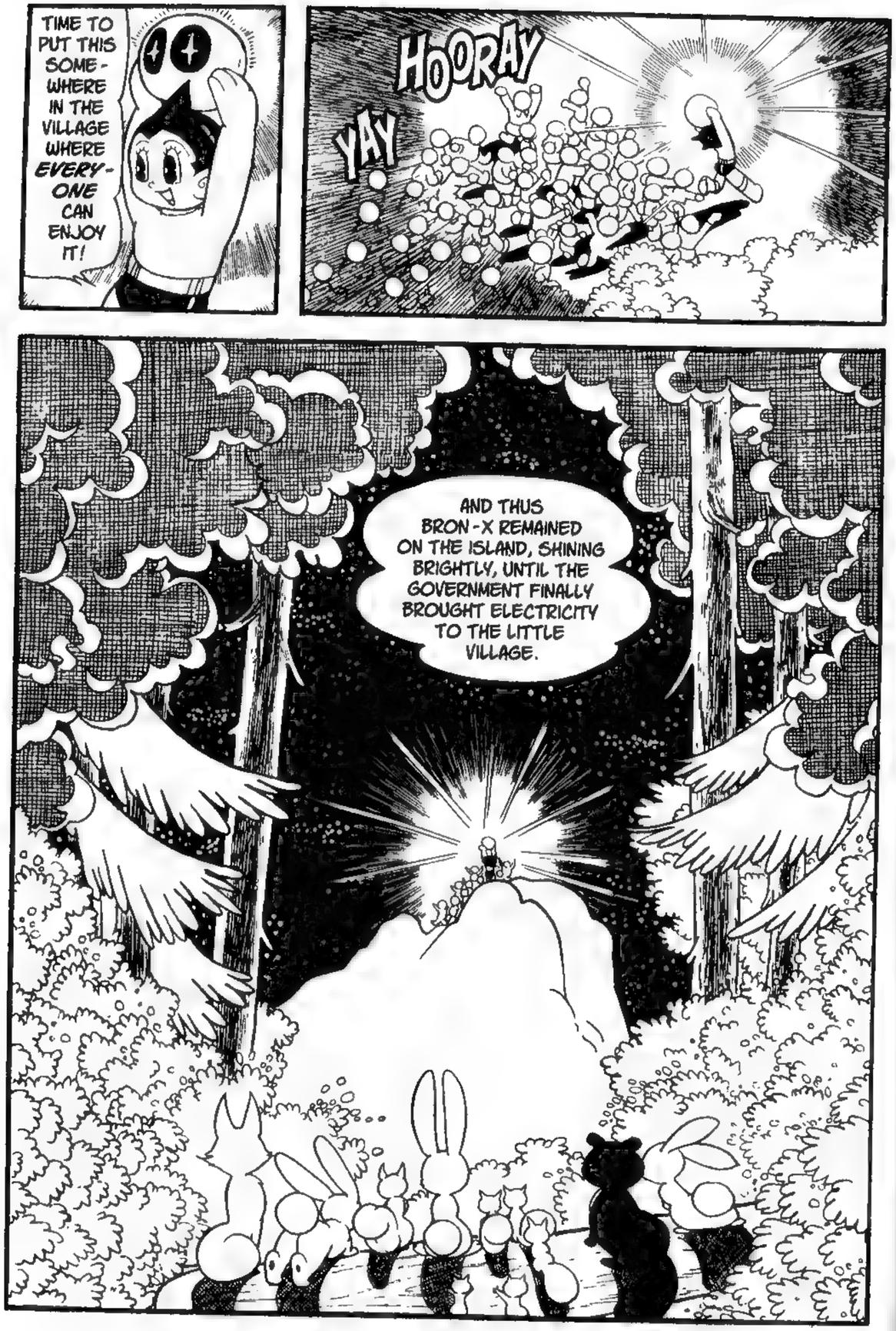
WHY YOU...

KNOCK IT OFF, GASTON! YOU'RE WAY OUT OF LINE!

INSPECTOR TAWASHI! THIS GUY WAS PLANNING TO USE BRON-X TO DO SOMETHING *REALLY* BAD! I *KNOW* IT!

GAME'S UP, GASTON... I'M *TAKING YOU IN!*

SOMETHING 'BOUT YOU ALWAYS DID BUG ME, GASTON...


TIME TO PUT THIS SOME-WHERE IN THE VILLAGE WHERE EVERY-ONE CAN ENJOY IT!
HOORAY
YAY
AND THUS BRON-X REMAINED ON THE ISLAND, SHINING BRIGHTLY, UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT FINALLY BROUGHT ELECTRICITY TO THE LITTLE VILLAGE.

URAN

First serialized from August to September 1960 in *Shonen* magazine.

SAY, URAN... WHEN *DID* YOU BECOME ASTRO'S BABY SISTER, ANYWAY?

GOSH, DR. TEZUKA... I'VE *ALWAYS* BEEN HIS SISTER!

SORRY, SIR... IT'S JUST THAT I *REALLY CAN'T* REMEMBER WHAT CONTEXT URAN FIRST APPEARED IN THE SERIES...

B-BUT YOU'RE THE STORY'S *CREATOR!*

HOW COULD YOU *POSSIBLY* FORGET!? OF ALL THE *RUDENESS!*

YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE, URAN... *SOMETHING* MUST'VE INSPIRED ME TO CREATE YOU....

I DON'T WANNA BE A PERSON OF *UNKNOWN ORIGINS!*

HELLO? PROFESSOR? *UM*, YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT URAN'S ORIGINS?

URAN? SURE, DR. TEZUKA... I GAVE HER TO ASTRO AS A REWARD IN THE LAST SCENE OF "THE INVISIBLE GIANT"...

HELLO? THIS ASTRO'S PARENTS? *UM*, ABOUT *URAN*...

UM, RIGHT... URAN WAS CREATED AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE'S DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY. HER DESIGN WAS BASED ON ASTRO'S, AND SHE WAS SENT HERE FROM THE DEPARTMENT...

...IN A REGISTERED MAIL PACKAGE!

WHAT?! YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT *URAN?!*

IT WAS A FLAWED IMPLEMENTATION OF ASTRO'S DESIGN... I SOLD THE ROBOT AFTER DEVELOPING IT, AND THEN SOMEONE AT THE DEPARTMENT MODIFIED IT INTO A LITTLE GIRL MODEL...

URAN? HMM... DON'T REMEMBER TOO WELL, BUT ON THE TV SHOW, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE WAS RETRIEVED FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN...

NAW, IT WASN'T THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN, IT WAS FROM THE TRASH DUMP!

HMM...

BUT WHAT'S THE *REAL* TRUTH HERE?

HEY! WHAT'S GOING?! IF YOU DON'T TREAT ME WITH A LITTLE MORE *RESPECT*, I'M GONNA THROW A *FIT!!*

SO HOW'S ASTRO GETTING ALONG WITH THE BROTHER 'N SISTER WE MADE FOR HIM?

WELL, HE'S SHOWING THEM AROUND TOKYO NOW...

...ACTING LIKE A GOOD BROTHER SHOULD!

THIS IS THE PRECISION MACHINERY FACTORY, WHERE THEY MAKE ROBOTS...

B...BUT WHERE DO THEY MAKE THE *HUMANS?*

WHAT?

HA HA! ACTUALLY, HUMANS COME FROM INSIDE THEIR MOTHER'S TUMMIES, COBALT...

GEE, I DON'T GET IT...

DON'T WORRY, COBALT...

...IT'LL ALL MAKE SENSE SOME DAY.

THIS IS AN ATOMIC REACTOR...

WHERE ARE WE? SURE IS BUSY...

WE'RE DOWNTOWN, COBALT... THERE'S LOTS OF STORES HERE...

WOW... THIS IS NEAT...

MAYBE I'LL TAKE THIS...

HEY! YOU GOTTA PAY FOR THAT STUFF, SONNY!!

IT'S NOT FREE?

NO! YOU'VE AT LEAST GOT TO PUT SOMETHING *DOWN* FOR IT!

SMASH

HEY! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!!

YOU *TOLD* ME TO *PUT SOMETHING DOWN!*

BUT THESE TOYS COST AN ARM AND A LEG!

AN ARM AND A LEG?!

GOSH, GOOD THING I'VE GOT TWO OF EACH... HERE'S A *LEG...*

COME ON, COBALT... YOU'VE GOT A *LOT* TO *LEARN* BEFORE YOU GO SHOPPING...

LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING REALLY COOL... THAT'S A *ROBOTTING CONTEST!* IT'S A MATCH BETWEEN ROBOTS, HELD ONCE A YEAR.

INTERNATIONAL ROBOTTING MATCH

ROBOT STADIUM

SEE? ROBOTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD COME HERE AND TRY TO SEE WHO'S THE *STRONGEST...*

DID *YOU* EVER PARTICIPATE, ASTRO?

LET'S SIT OVER THERE! I SEE SOME OPEN SEATS!

IT'S THE TENTH ROUND OF A MATCH BETWEEN TWO 200,000 HORSEPOWER CHAMPION ROBOTS!

GOSH! THIS IS SO *EXCITING!*

HANG IN THERE, GUYS!

CRASH

VROOM

AND THE VICTOR IS THE GERMAN CHAMPION, *SHUBE NO. 1!*

VOMP

KAYOOOSH

COBALT, YOU THINK WE'VE GOT 100,000 HORSE-POWER LIKE OUR OLDER BROTHER, ASTRO?

GOSH, I THINK SO...

YAY YAY HOORAY YAY

HEY, WHERE'D URAN GO, COBALT?

SHE WAS HERE A SECOND AGO...

AND NEXT... THE CHAMPION FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MONGOLIA, THE 100,000 HORSEPOWER GENGHIS *KHAN BARBECUE, RANKED FOURTH IN THE WORLD!*

BRAMRUWRAGO!

YAY! YAY! YAY! YAY!

A STRANGE GIRL'S ENTERING THE ARENA, MR. CHAIRMAN...

THIS WON'T DO! SOMEBODY *STOP* HER!

YAY! YAY! YAY! YAY!

HEY, LOOKIT THE CUTE CHICK IN THE ARENA!

SHE'S ONE OF THE ATHLETES?

HEY! IT'S *DANGER-OUS* IN THERE!

SHE'S A NEW TRANSISTOR MODEL!

BUGWUDODEDAMA!

GET 'IM! GO FOR IT!

YAY YAY HOORAY YAY

THIS IS TOO CRUEL! *STOP!!*

HEY! THAT'S MY NEW KID SISTER!!

DOGOBUJIBO!

EEEK!

CH4

YAY YAY HOORAY YAY

SHWK

LOOK! SHE STOPPED HIM!

WOW! SHE'S ACTUALLY PUSHING HIM BACK!

VROOOOM

URAN!

URAN! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN YOUR SEAT!

B...BUT I WANNA HAVE MORE FUN!

FUN? BUT IT'S AGAINST THE RULES FOR YOU TO BE HERE!

WHAT ARE RULES?

RULES AREN'T MEANT TO BE BROKEN!

YOU NEED PERMISSION FROM THE CHAIRMAN TO PARTICIPATE IN A ROBOTTING MATCH! AND YOU HAVE TO REGISTER!

THEN I WANNA REGISTER! IT'S REALLY GREAT EXCERCISE, ASTRO...

BRRRING BRRRING
TIME TO GET UP!
RISE 'N SHINE!
RISE 'N...
SMASH
THING'S WAY TOO NOISY...
COBALT! URAN!
TIME TO GET UP!
HURRY, OR YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!
WHA? AW, IT'S JUST TV!
WE C'N JUST TURN IT OFF...
YEAH, WHO WANTS TA GO TA SCHOOL?
SCREE SCREE
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS SOUND?!

SCREE
WE'RE AWAKE NOW! YOU C'N TURN IT OFF...
MORNING, ASTRO!
HURRY UP, COBALT... TIME TA SCRUB 'N POLISH YOUR BODY....
DON'T SEE WHY WE HAVE TO DO THIS *EVERY* DAY...
DON'T TAKE ALL DAY, YOU GUYS! BREAKFAST IS READY!
WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?
GLUB BLUB GLUB
YIKES!
DO YOU TWO THINK YOU'RE DOING, SO EARLY IN THE MORNING?
WE DIDN'T MEAN FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, ASTRO...
COBALT WANTED TO TRY SOMETHING, ASTRO...

VROOOM

I THOUGHT IF I CONNECTED MY MOTOR TO URAN'S THAT IT'D BE LIKE A WASHING MACHINE, 'N WE'D GET CLEANER A LOT EASIER!

WHAT? YOU WERE PLAYING WASHING MACHINE?

YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO DO STUFF LIKE THAT WITHOUT ASKING *MOM!*

ALL RIGHT, COBALT, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR BREAKFAST REFUEL... BEND OVER NOW...

MOM, HOW COME WE TAKE IN FUEL FROM OUR REAR ENDS BUT HUMANS EAT FOOD WITH THEIR MOUTHS?

THAT'S BECAUSE WE EAT DIFFERENT THINGS, COBALT...

HUMANS SURE ARE STRANGE, AREN'T THEY, MOM...?

C'MON, COBALT... WE'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL...

NOW DON'T YOU KIDS GO MAKING FUN OF HUMANS!

SEE YOU LATER, MOM!

KIDS GET OFF OKAY?

YES...

... URAN AND COBALT ARE STILL BRAND NEW, SO I NEVER KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN NEXT...

SURE ISN'T EASY BEING A PARENT, IS IT...?

NOT LIKE US, ARE THEY? WE WERE ADULTS FROM THE MOMENT WE WERE BORN...

RIGHT. WE WERE PARENTS...

I THINK IN MY NEXT LIFE I'D LIKE TA BE A KID...

TAKING CARE OF YOUNGER BROTHERS 'N SISTERS ISN'T EASY!

HI, ASTRO... TEACHER SAID WE OUGHTA PLAY WITH BUILDING BLOCKS, BUT I'M USING *CHAIRS* TO BUILD SOME STUFF INSTEAD...

AT THIS RATE, URAN'S PROB'LY GETTING INTO TROUBLE, TOO!

SO WE ALL JOIN HANDS 'N WE ALL FALL DOWN...

♪OUCH!♪

HALP! STOP!

♪OWW!♪

♪OOOHH!♪

I NEED TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU TWO...

LISTEN... YOU'RE BOTH ROBOTS, 'N WE ROBOTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM HUMANS!

WE *KNOW* THAT!

BUT WE'RE GOING TO *HUMAN SCHOOLS*, ASTRO!

...THAT'S BECAUSE ROBOTS WANT TO BE AS SIMILAR TO HUMANS AS POSSIBLE...

BUT WE'RE SO MUCH STRONGER THAN HUMANS, IF WE EXERT OURSELVES EVEN JUST A LITTLE...

...IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL WE'LL CAUSE HUMANS A LOT OF PROBLEMS

SO WE NEED TO BE AS LOW-KEY AS WE CAN, AND NOT USE *TOO MUCH* POWER...

WHAT THE --?!

GOSH, THAT'S SOMETHING I REALLY UNDERSTAND...

IT'S THE PRINCIPAL FROM MY SCHOOL!

HEY, COBALT 'N URAN! COME UP AND HIDE IN THE TREE WITH ME...

GOLLY, ASTRO... I'M *SURE* I SAW THAT ONE GUY YESTERDAY AT THE ROBOTTING FESTIVAL...

♪SHHH!♪...

WELL, *THAT'S* A SHOCK... YOU SAY *URAN* WAS IN THE ROBOTTING MATCH YESTERDAY?

THAT IS CORRECT, SIR. I AM THE HEAD OF THE ROBOTTING ASSOCIATION, AND THE GIRL *DEFINITELY* FOUGHT ONE OF THE ROBOTS!

THIS IS A MOST SHAMEFUL EVENT IN OUR SCHOOL'S HISTORY, MUSTACHIO!

B-BUT *WHO* LET THE KIDS IN THE MATCH, EH?

EHEM... GENTLEMEN, THE POINT IS...

...THAT ACCORDING TO THE *RULES*, ANY ROBOT THAT FORMALLY APPEARS IN THE MATCH HAS TO FIGHT *32 BOUTS!*

THAT'S ALL FINE 'N DANDY, BUT URAN'S STILL A *KID!!*

AH, BUT SHE'S ALSO A *ROBOT*, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN!

SO ACCORDING TO THE RULES OF ROBOTTING, I MUST FORMALLY REQUEST THAT SHE APPEAR...

THEN I MUST BEG YOU TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL! URAN'S NOT AROUND...

CRACK

KATHUD

URAN?!!

ALL RIGHT, ASTRO... ARE YOU THE ONE WHO PUT URAN UP TO THIS?!

ACTUALLY, I ENTERED ON MY OWN, TEACHER....

I COULDN'T HELP IT! IT LOOKED LIKE *FUN!*

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, YOUNG URAN HERE IS SAYING SHE'D BE *GLAD* TO ENTER THE ROBOTTING FESTIVAL...

SO THAT SETTLES IT. URAN WILL OFFICIALLY ENTER THE MATCH *TODAY* AND FIGHT 32 ROUNDS WITH OTHER ROBOT OPPONENTS.

I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND...

GRR!! DO AS YOU DANG PLEASE!

LADIES 'N GENTLEMEN! IN THIS CORNER, THE ROBOTTING REPRESENTATIVE FROM HONG KONG... THE AMAZING 100,000 HORSEPOWER ROBOT, *LEN TAN!*

YAY! HOOORAY! YAY! YAY! YAY! YAY!

AND IN THE OTHER CORNER, ANOTHER 100,000 HORSEPOWER ROBOT, *MISS URAN!*

MISS URAN IS CURRENTLY A FIRST GRADER AT *OCHANOMIZU ELEMENTARY!*

PEEEEP

YAY! YAY! YAY! HOORAY! YAY!

IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS YOUNG LADY MADE HER FIRST APPEARANCE IN A MATCH ONLY *FIVE DAYS* AGO...

THIS BEING ONLY HER SECOND MATCH, DOES SHE EVEN STAND A *CHANCE?*

SO PETITE AND CUTE, HOW CAN SHE POSSIBLE MUSTER THE *POWER* SHE'LL EED?

ROTV

YEAH YAY YAY

YAY YAY YAY HOORAY

I'M ROOTING FOR YOU URAN!! HANG IN THERE!

WOOOSH

WOOOOSH

ROAR

I CAN'T BEAR TO WATCH, URAN!

SPROING

YANK

RAOH !!

BONK KA BUNG BEEP BAM

YAY YAY YAY... HOORAY FOR URAN!

YAY! YAY! WAY TO GO! YAY!

PUFF PUFF...

I *WON*, ASTRO! I *WON!*

YEAH, BUT YOU REALLY HAD ME *WORRIED*, URAN!

I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO JUMP IN AND *SAVE* YOU...

THEY SAY I GO UP AGAINST SOMEONE EVEN MORE POWERFUL TOMORROW, ASTRO!

BUT NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO TO SCHOOL, URAN...

KNOW WHAT, ASTRO...? I THINK I LIKE ROBOTTING BETTER THAN SCHOOL...

BUT WE'RE KIDS, URAN, AND KIDS HAVE TO GOT TO SCHOOL...

YEAH, BUT IT'S HARD GOING TO SCHOOL *AND* BEING IN THE ROBOTTING MATCH...

I ALMOST WISH MY BODY COULD SPLIT INTO TWO PEOPLE...

HOW COME?

?

WELL, THEN ONE OF ME COULD GO TO *SCHOOL* AND THE OTHER COULD GO TO THE *ROBOTTING* MATCH...

NOW, URAN... THAT'S NOT BEING REALISTIC. YOU'VE *GOTTA* GO TO SCHOOL.

AH... IT MAY NOT BE AS UNREALISTIC AS IT SOUNDS...

WHA?!

I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GRANT YOUR WISH...

IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, I AM A SPECIALIST IN 1/2 ROBOTS... IN ROBOTS THAT *SPLIT INTO TWO!*

BEHOLD MY DOG...

C'MERE, SANDWICH...

WHA? THE DOG SPLIT IN *TWO!*

TEE HEE HEE.... AND THIS IS ONLY A DOG... WAIT'LL YOU SEE THE 1/2 *HUMANOID ROBOTS* I'M MAKING...

YOU *DID* SAY YOU WISHED YOU COULD SPLIT INTO TWO PEOPLE TO DO TWO DIFFERENT THINGS, DIDN'T YOU?

IF YOU SO WISH IT, I CAN MAKE *YOUR* BODY SPLIT IN TWO!

WELL, I'M SORRY, MISTER, BUT WE'RE *NOT INTER-ESTED...*

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU TAKES CARE OF OUR BODIES, AND WE DON'T LET ANY ONE ELSE TINKER WITH US...

WELL, IF YOU EVER CHANGE YOUR MIND, GIVE ME A RING HERE...

TEE HEE HEE... I'LL BE WAITING ....

C'MON, URAN... YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL...

BE SURE TO THROW AWAY THAT PAMPHLET HE GAVE YOU!

SO, WHADDYA THINK ABOUT THE ROBOTTING MATCH TODAY?

MISS URAN'S BEEN STEADILY WINNING HER MATCHES...

AT THIS RATE SHE MIGHT WIND UP AS THE CHAMPION!

B... BUT WASN'T *WAKANOHANA* THE CHAMP?! OR WAS THAT *SUMO?*

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS!!

COULD BE A *PROBLEM* ...

HEY, URAN! *URAN!*

CAN WE HAVE YOUR *AUTO-GRAPH?*

UM, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE YET...

HI, URAN! WE'RE ROOTING FOR YOU TODAY...

DON'T WORRY... I'LL WIN...

URAN!!

GOSH, ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE'S SO *POPULAR...*

BEFORE I KNOW IT, SHE'LL BE FEATURED IN ONE OF THOSE WEEKLY IDOL MAGAZINES FOR GIRLS...

'N THAT WOULDN'T BE GOOD FOR URAN...

EVEN MORE WORRISOME...

... IS THAT SHE'LL LIKE FIGHTING MORE THAN STUDYING!!

TODAY'S ROBOTTING MATCH AGAIN STARS MISS URAN! THE HALL'S PACKED WITH HER FANS!

YAY YAY HOORAY
GO URAN!
WAY TO GO URAN!
URAN FOREVER!

ROBOT. TING!

HOORAY!
BANZAI!
YAY!
URAN!
YAY!

GOSH, URAN OUGHTA BE COMING OUT BY NOW...

WONDER IF SHE WENT HOME ON HER OWN?

I HOPE ASTRO'LL FORGIVE ME...

HEY, MISS URAN...

GIVE US A SMILE, MISS URAN!

SORRY, BOYS... I'M *BUSY*...

LESSEE... THE MAN SAID HE WAS A 1/2 HUMANOID RESEARCHER!

1/2

BRRMOOO

WELL, WELL, WELL... COME ON IN... YOU CAME ALONE, DEAREST? NOT WITH YOUR *OLDER BROTHER*, I HOPE...

I CAN TURN YOU INTO A HUMANOID IN ONE WEEK...

UM... WELL...

I CAME WITHOUT TELLING MY PARENTS, SO I WAS HOPING YOU COULD DO IT IN A *DAY*...

YOU'RE NOT SCARED, I HOPE... I'VE GOTTA TAKE YOU APART FIRST, YOU KNOW...

AH, BUT HOW COULD I FORGET... ROBOTS DON'T GET SCARED, DO THEY?

HMM... ONE DAY? PRETTY DIFFICULT...

... BUT I CAN GIVE IT A TRY...

CLOSE YOUR EYES NOW...

THERE WE GO... GOOD GIRL...

HEE HEE HEE... NOW FOR THE *FUN* PART...

URAN! WHERE'RE ARE YOU? ARE YOU *LOST?*

URAN! ANSWER ME!

YOU GUYS SEEN URAN?

SHE WENT THAT-A-WAY...

URAN! WHERE ARE YOU?

I'LL RAISE MY HEARING POWER TO 1000 -- WAIT! I *HEAR* HER!!

SHE'S IN *THAT HOUSE THERE!*

BLAST IT! SOMEONE'S *DETECTED* ME!

GO DRIVE 'EM AWAY, SANDWICH!

WHA? A ROBO-DOG?!

GRRR

GROWL

TAKE THIS!

FWP

THIS DOG GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

HE SPLITS INTO TWO!

AND NOW I'M CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE!

ARGH!... HALP!

WOW... I COULD BE CRUSHED! THIS GUY'S POWERFUL!

I CAN HARDLY STAND IT!

I'LL HAVE TO TRY SOMETHING...

HOW 'BOUT *THAT?!*

JUST TO BE SURE, I'LL PUT YOU INTO THIS MANHOLE...

HOPE NOTHING ELSE GETS IN MY WAY...

URAN! IT'S *ME, ASTRO!* I'M HERE TO *HELP* YOU!

BLAST IT! I'M TOO LATE! THEY'VE *GONE!*

THEY MUST'VE LEFT WHILE I WAS TAKING CARE OF THE ROBO-DOG!

I BET THAT WEIRDO CHARACTER ESCAPED OUT THE BACK WITH URAN...

GOTTA CATCH UP TO 'EM...

LOOOH

CLANK TRAMP TRAMP CLUNK

CLANK TRAMP CLINK TRAMP

HA HEE HEE! ALL I HAD TO DO WAS OPEN THE TOOK THE BAIT RIGHT AWAY!

ROBOTS'RE SMART, BUT THEY CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THE EVIL TRICKS *HUMANS* THINK UP!

HOKAY, LITTLE GIRL... TIME FOR ME TO MAKE A MESS OUT OF YOU... *HEE HEE HEE!*

BZZT BZZZT BZZZT

PROFESSOR!!!

WHAT'S UP, ASTRO? IT'S LATE AT NIGHT!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT, PROFESSOR! I CAUSED SOMETHING *TERRIBLE!!* ≠WAAAA!≠

NOW, NOW, ASTRO... STOP CRYING AND TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED!

...SO I LOST SIGHT OF URAN 'N I'VE SPENT ALL DAY LOOKING FOR HER 'N I CAN'T FIND HER *ANYWHERE...*

AS HER OLDER BROTHER, I'M A *FAILURE!!*

SHE'S PROBABLY BEING TAKEN APART BY THAT WEIRDO SCIENTIST RIGHT NOW!! ≠WAAA!≠

SO WHO IS THIS WEIRDO, ASTRO?

WHAT'S THIS? A *STOOPED* MAN WITH A *WHITE* BEARD?

HM... I THINK I KNOW WHO IT MIGHT BE...

HERE... IT'S PROB'LY *DR. XCESS*. A FORMER SCIENTIST AND REAL ODDBALL...

HE KEPT TALKING ABOUT 1/2 HUMANOIDS OR SOME-THING...

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT... THAT *PROVES* HE'S A WEIRDO!

GOSH, NOW I'M EVEN *MORE* WORRIED ...

I'LL DO WHAT I CAN, ASTRO... YOU GO HOME FOR NOW...

GOSH, WHAT'LL I TELL MOM ...?

DON'T BE TOO SHOCKED, MOM... BUT URAN GOT LOST...

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ASTRO? SHE CAME HOME AND IS ALREADY ASLEEP!

WHAT?!

NOW IT'S *YOUR* TURN TO BE SHOCKED, ISN'T IT?

URAN!!

GOSH, URAN... YOU SURE MADE YOUR OLDER BROTHER *WORRY* A LOT!

PHWEW!

GUESS I NEVER REALLY HAD ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT *AFTER ALL*...

C'N I TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE, ASTRO?

URAN WAS ACTING KINDA WEIRD TONIGHT...

AW, C'MON, COBALT... I'VE HAD *ENOUGH* WORRYING ABOUT HER...

Y'KNOW HOW SHE ALWAYS USED TO BRAG ABOUT THE ROBOTTING MATCHES?

WELL, TODAY WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...

SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING 'BOUT THEM AT ALL...

'N SOMETIMES SHE MUMBLES TO HERSELF ABOUT "ONE HALF" SOMETHING OR OTHER...

SHE *WHAT?!*

NOW, KIDS! IF YOU STAY UP TOO LATE, YOU'LL OVERSLEEP TOMOR-ROW!!

DON'T WORRY, DAD... WE'RE GOING TO BED NOW...

G'NITE, DAD!

DO ME A FAVOR, COBALT, AND KEEP AN EYE ON URAN TONIGHT. LET ME KNOW IF YOU SEE ANYTHING WEIRD, OKAY?

GOTCHA ...

.....
.....

TWO A.M. 'N ALL'S WELL...

TWO A.M.?...
≥YAWN≤

≥ZZZZ≤
≥ZZZ≤

GEE, I CAN'T SLEEP ...

EVER SINCE I FELL ASLEEP ON THAT TABLE, I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING...
I FEEL LIKE SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH MY BODY...

EEEK!

I JUST SPLIT IN TWO!!

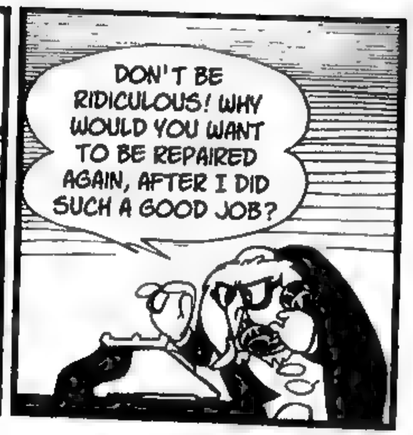
GOSH, WHAT'LL I DO?!!

I BET MOM'LL REALLY BE ANGRY WITH ME... WONDER IF IT CAN EVEN BE REPAIRED...

HEY, I HEAR A PHONE RINGING DOWNSTAIRS!

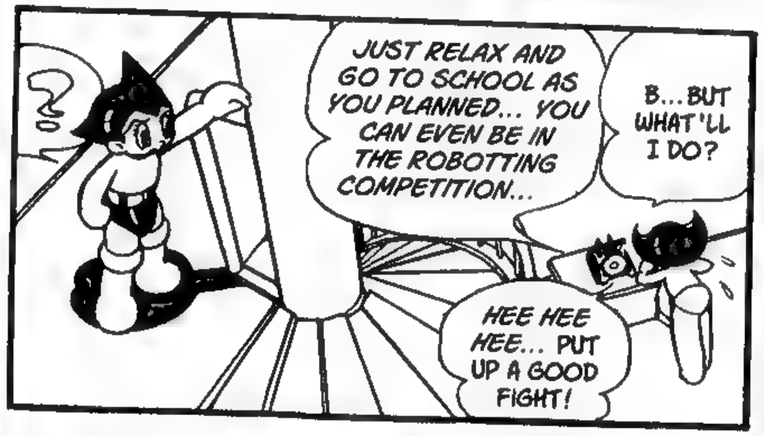
HELLO? OH... DR. XCESS?
UM, THIS IS URAN... MY BODY SPLIT IN TWO EARLIER!

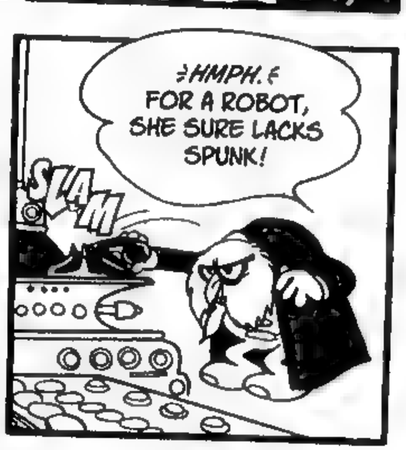
TEE HEE... WELL, WERE YOU THRILLED? WHAT? YOU WANT ME TO REPAIR YOU?


DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO BE REPAIRED AGAIN, AFTER I DID SUCH A GOOD JOB?

B-BUT DOCTOR... IT FEELS TERRIBLE, AND I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO APPEAR IN PUBLIC LIKE THIS...

NOW, JUST RELAX, YOUNG LADY... I MADE YOU SO YOUR BODY CAN TURN INTO TWO FULL PEOPLE...


JUST RELAX AND GO TO SCHOOL AS YOU PLANNED... YOU CAN EVEN BE IN THE ROBOTTING COMPETITION...
B...BUT WHAT'LL I DO?
HEE HEE HEE... PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT!


≥HMPH.≤
FOR A ROBOT, SHE SURE LACKS SPUNK!
SLAM

GOSH, WHAT'LL I DO?

ALL RIGHT, URAN... WHO CALLED YOU?
ASTRO!

ARE YOU HIDING SOMETHING FROM ME, URAN?!
.....
.....
.....

I KNOW YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING, URAN, BUT REMEMBER, *ROBOTS DON'T LIE!*

WHERE'D YOU *REALLY* GO LAST NIGHT, URAN?

I DON'T REMEMBER...

AND BESIDES, IT'S NONE OF YOUR *BEESWAX!*

WAY TO GO, *GAMERAN*... THAT OUGHTA BE ENOUGH REHEARSING FOR THE MATCH TOMORROW...

URAN...

YOU KNOW WHO YOU'RE GOING UP AGAINST TOMORROW?

N-NO I-I D-DON'T

IT'S *URAN*, ASTRO'S BABY SISTER, WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE HIM AN' HAS WON EVERY MATCH SO FAR!!

YOU'RE GOING UP AGAINST A *GIRL*, AN' I WON'T STAND YOU LOSING TO A GIRL IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP! THAT CLEAR?!

FER S-SURE I-I W-WON'T L-LOSE S-S-SIR!

SO GO AHEAD AND FLATTEN 'ER, SMASH 'ER, TAKE 'ER APART!

G-G-GOOD... N-N-NIGHT, PA PA...

SMACK

I'M COUNTING ON YOU, BOY...

THIS YEAR THE CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY WILL BE *ALL MINE!* NO LITTLE GIRL'S GONNA GET IT!!

LAADIES AAND GENTLEMEN! AT LAST, THE LONG-AWAITED FINAL DAY OF THIS YEAR'S WORLD ROBOTTING CHAMPIONSHIP! THE TITLE MATCH STARTS AT ONE P.M., WITH THE HIGHEST ATTENDANCE THIS SEASON!!!

ROBOTTING

WORLD CHAMPION TOURNAMENT

WORLD ROBOTTING CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH

GOSH, I WUNNER WHO'LL WIN? *URAN* OR *GAMERAN?*

I BET THE ONE WHO DOESN'T *LOSE* WILL *WIN!*

NAW, FER SURE THE *STRONGEST* WILL WIN!

THEY SAY THEY'RE EQUALLY RANKED IN STRENGTH, BUT GAMERAN'S GOT BETTER TECHNIQUE!

STILL, URAN'S AWFULLY QUICK ON HER FEET!

SO, YOU THINK GAMERAN MIGHT PULL THIS OFF?

HA HA! IT'LL BE A PIECE OF CAKE FOR HIM!

THIS IS URAN'S DRESSING ROOM, HERE...

THAT'S ODD! NOBODY'S HOME!

GUESS SHE'S STILL AT SCHOOL! WHAT A GOOD KID!

OKAY, WHAT'S THE ANSWER HERE? URAN?

8 - 6 =

UM, ER... TWO....

T..T... TWO...

CRACK

WHAT'S THE MATTER? GOT A HEADACHE, URAN?

ER... UM... YEAH.....

YOU GO REST IN THE CLINIC, OKAY?

IT'LL GET BETTER SOON...

I'M FINE, ASTRO... *REALLY...*

YOU'VE GOTTA REST, URAN...

SHE KEEPS HOLDING HER HEAD, TEACHER...

HMM... AND TODAY'S THE FINAL MATCH OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP, ISN'T IT...

IT STARTS AT ONE P.M.

WE'VE GOTTA STOP HER FROM GOING!

SHE WAS REALLY UP FOR IT, THOUGH...

NO, ASTRO! DON'T LET HER GO! SHE'S GOTTA STOP THIS ROBOTTING NONSENSE!

TODAY'S THE TITLE MATCH...

OH, MY GOSH... TIME TO GO!

I'VE GOTTA GET MOVING!

CRACK SNAP

HALP! I SPLIT IN *TWO!!*

RUMBLE RUMBLE

YIKES! WEIRD BUBBLES ARE COMING OUT OF THE CRACKED SIDES AND FORMING SOMETHING!!

BUBBLE BUBBLE BUBBLE BUBBLE

IT'S TAKING THE SHAPE OF MY FACE!

FSSSST

SAME THING'S HAPPENING WITH MY OTHER HALF!

I'LL GO TO THE ROBOTTING MATCH!

WOW! THERE'S TWO OF ME NOW!

NOBODY'D EVER THINK WE'RE TWO HALVES!

THIS IS GREAT! ONE OF ME CAN GO TO SCHOOL...

...AND THE OTHER'S FREE! NOBODY'LL SUSPECT!

I'LL BE SLEEPING HERE!

YAY! IT'S URAN!!

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, URAN!

YAY, URAN!

GIVE IT TO HIM, URAN!

GAMERAN'S ALREADY IN HIS DRESSING ROOM...

HE'S TALKING ABOUT TAKING YOU PART...

DON'T WORRY! I'M NOT GONNA LOSE!

THE CROWD'S ROOTING FOR YOU, SO GO OUT THERE 'N WIN, URAN!

DON'T WORRY, I WILL!

GIVE IT TO HER, GAMERAN!

LAAADIES 'N GENTLEMEN, BOOYYZ 'N GIRRLZ... AND NOW FOR THE FINAL MATCH OF THE WORLD ROBOTTING CHAMPIONSHIP!

IN ONE CORNER, MISS URAN, WITH 100,000 HORSEPOWER! IN THE OTHER, GAMERAN, ALSO WITH 100,000 HORSEPOWER!

YAY YAY HOORAH URAN YAY YAY YAY

GIVE IT TO 'IM, URAN!

I'M WITH YOU, GAMERAN!!

URAN'S SURE TO WIN...

GAMERAN

YAY

I WOULDN'T BE SURE... LOOK AT HER OPPONENT TODAY...

TOSS HIM OUT OF THE RING, URAN!!

HOORAY

RRR NG

'ELLO? OCHANOMIZU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HERE. AND TO *WHOM* AM I SPEAKING?

URAN?! WHY, SHE'S RESTING HERE. SHE'S GOT A HEADACHE.

THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! TELL HER THE 1/2 EXPERIMENT'S A *FAILURE!*

WHEN HER BODY SPLITS IN TWO, HER MENTAL AND PHYSICAL POWERS'LL ALL BE *HALVED!*

YAY YAY HOORAH

HOOORAH HORRAAAAH

TELL HER SHE MUSTN'T GO TO THE ROBOT-TING MATCH!

YESSIR. I'LL LET HER KNOW AS SOON AS SHE GETS UP...

HURRY, THERE'S NOT A SECOND TO LOSE!

♪HMPH♫... WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS, ORDERING A *TEACHER* AROUND?

DON'T PULL ANY PUNCHES, GAMERAN! *SMASH HER!*

BAM

WHOOPS!

THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN!

THAT'S ODD... GAMERAN AND URAN WERE S'POSED TO HAVE THE SAME AMOUNT OF POWER...

WAY TO GO!!

YAY YAY WHOA STOP! YAY

THEY SAY URAN'S GOT 100,000 HORSEPOWER, BUT SHE'S REALLY A *WIMP!*

GIVE IT TO HER, GAMERAN! SHOW US HOW WEAK SHE REALLY IS!

GOSH, I CAN'T GET ANY POWER....

♪OWWW!♫ THAT *HURT!!*

OUCH!

EEEK! STOP!

THIS IS REALLY *WEIRD*...

GUGUGUOOH!

WAP

WAY TA GO, GAMERAN!!

SNAP

HA HA! THE TROPHY'S AS GOOD AS MINE NOW!

THWACK

STOP! STOP!

STOP, GAMERAN! YOU'LL HURT THE POOR THING!

DON'T BE SO CRUEL, GAMERAN!

GAME-RAN'S OVER-DOING IT!

THE AUDIENCE HAS COME TO THEIR FEET AT THE SIGHT OF THIS CRUEL SPECTACLE...

URAN!!

URAN! WHO'S THAT ON THE *TV?*

.....
.....

SO WHICH IS THE REAL URAN? THE ONE ON TV OR THE ONE RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME ?!!

THEY'RE *BOTH* ME, ASTRO...

B-BUT...

Y-YOU MEAN YOU HAD THAT OLD MAN TURN YOU INTO *TWO HALVES* ?

...AND YOU KEPT IT A *SECRET* FROM ME, YOUR *OWN BROTHER*, DIDN'T YOU?! WHY, URAN!? *WHY?!*

I'M SORRY, ASTRO... I'M SORRY...

LISTEN, SILLY! LOOK AT THE TV! IT'S TERRIBLE!

WE'VE GOTTA GET YOU TO THE HALL *RIGHT AWAY*, SO YOU CAN RETURN TO YOUR NORMAL BODY...

EEEK!

LET'S *GO!*

UH OH... WE'RE TOO LATE!

STOP! DON'T SMASH MY SISTER!!

I TOLD YOU TO STOP, YOU LUNKHEAD!!

KATHUD

DON'T COME AT ME!!

SS-SSHAA-DDDUP!!

GRRR...

≠WAAAH≠ ...

DON'T CRY, URAN... I'LL ASK PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU TO MAKE YOUR OTHER HALF... JUST DON'T DO THIS AGAIN, OKAY?

HOLD IT!

BECAUSE OF *YOUR MEDDLING*, I LOST THE TROPHY! IT'S PAYBACK TIME FOR GAMERAN!

OKAY... TAKE 'EM APART, GUYS!

WHAT'D I DO TO DESERVE THIS?

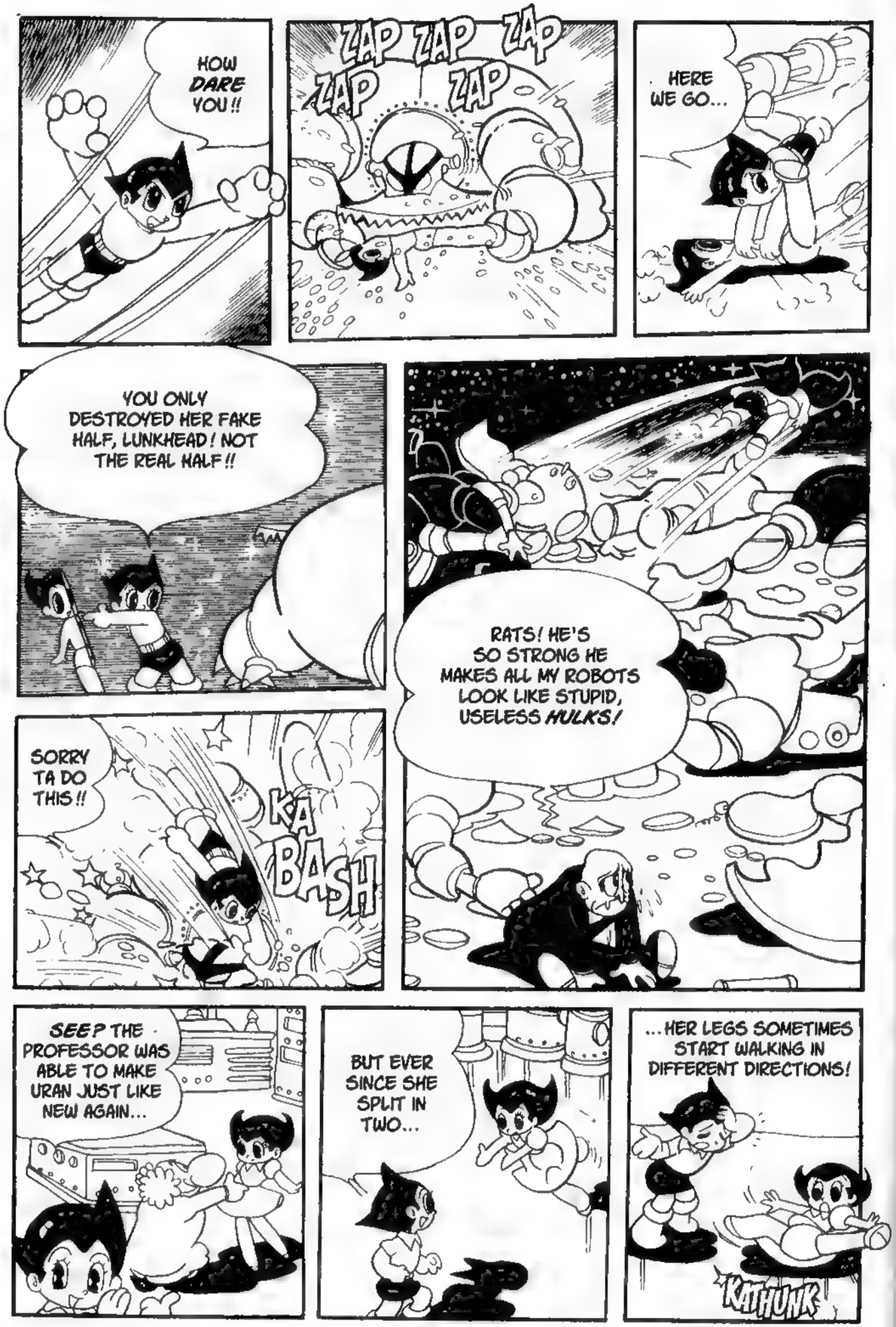
RUN FOR IT, URAN! THERE'S NO WAY TO TALK THESE GUYS OUT OF THIS...

HURRY, URAN!

EEK!

UNLESS YOU STOP MAKING TROUBLE, ASTRO BOY, HE'LL *TEAR HER APART!*

COWARD!! GIVE ME BACK MY LITTLE SISTER!


HOW DARE YOU!!
ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP
HERE WE GO...
YOU ONLY DESTROYED HER FAKE HALF, LUNKHEAD! NOT THE REAL HALF!!
RATS! HE'S SO STRONG HE MAKES ALL MY ROBOTS LOOK LIKE STUPID, USELESS HULKS!
SORRY TA DO THIS!!
KA BASH
SEE? THE PROFESSOR WAS ABLE TO MAKE URAN JUST LIKE NEW AGAIN...
BUT EVER SINCE SHE SPLIT IN TWO...
...HER LEGS SOMETIMES START WALKING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS!
KATHUNK

DEMON BEES

First serialized from March to June 1963 in *Shonen* magazine.

IN A MYSTERIOUS EMPIRE CALLED *ULTRA-GENGHIS KHAN*...

CLACK

CLAK

O LOYAL RED-BLACK PARTY MEMBERS OF THE ULTRA-GHENGIS KHAN EMPIRE!

HAIL TO THE EMPEROR! LONG LIVE THE ULTRA GENGHIS KHAN EMPIRE!

YOUR LOYALTY IS APPRECIATED, MEN!

BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO GO TO WORK!

READY TO DEPART ON TODAY'S MISSION, SIR!

ROAR ROAR

TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP

WHA P!

WE HAVE COME TO TAKE AWAY YOUR SON...

NO! PLEASE... NOT THAT...

MA'AM... THE LAW SAYS HE HAS TO BE TAKEN AT AGE TEN!

NO... *P-PLEASE, NO!!*

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

NO! NO! GIVE MY SON BACK !!

DEAR GOD, HELP ME... WHAT A CRUEL COUNTRY THIS IS...

ROBO-P... YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME... PLEASE...

YOU'VE GOT TO HELP GET MY LITTLE BOY BACK...

KA THUNK KA THUNK

I UNDER-STAND, MADAM...

ROBO-G, ISN'T THERE SOME-THING WE CAN DO?

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. I CAN HARDLY STAND IT MY-SELF...

I HAVE HEARD THERE IS A POWERFUL ROBOT IN JAPAN NAMED ASTRO...

YES. ASTRO MAY BE ABLE TO HELP US...

VOOOSH

GO TO JAPAN, ROBO-P, AND ASK ASTRO TO HELP US! I WILL WAIT HERE!

WHA?! THASH THE FUNNIESHT-LOOKING POST-BOX I'VE EVER SHEEN...

=HIC=

HELLO. DOES A ROBOT NAMED ASTRO LIVE NEAR HERE?

?

HUHN? THE POSHT BOX ISH ASHKING FOR AN ADDRESH?

PLEASE HELP ME. I MUST KNOW...

AW, SHADDUP! DON' NEED NO MAIL!

BRING ON THE GUNS 'N ARROWSH! I SHTILL WON'T TALK!

SHWIP

KA SHUNK

KACHANK

I BROUGHT ARROWS AND GUNS... NOW TELL ME!

*ECHE... HE... HE LIVES OVER *THERE*....

THIS IS TOO SCARY! I NEED A DRINK!

BEER! I NEED *BEER!*

CLATTER

BONK

BONK

CLACK

CLATTER

CLATTER

YOU HEAR THAT, ASTRO?

THAT'S A *ROBOT*!

IT'S COMING THIS WAY!

IT STOPPED IN FRONT OF OUR HOUSE!

WHO'S THERE?!

FLASH

ASTRO... ASTRO...

I NEED YOUR HELP! MY MISTRESS' SON WAS ABDUCTED!

ABDUCTED? YOU SHOULD CALL THE POLICE, NOT ME!!

I HAVE COME FROM ULTRA-GENGHIS KHAN!

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A PLACE...

I CAME FOR YOU!

SORRY, BUT I CAN'T HELP! THE ROBOT LAW SAYS I CAN'T GO OVERSEAS WITHOUT PERMISSION!

PLEASE... I AM BEGGING YOU! YOU MUST COME WITH ME!

GOSH, WHAT SHOULD I *DO*? I'VE GOT A TEST TOMORROW AT SCHOOL, TOO.

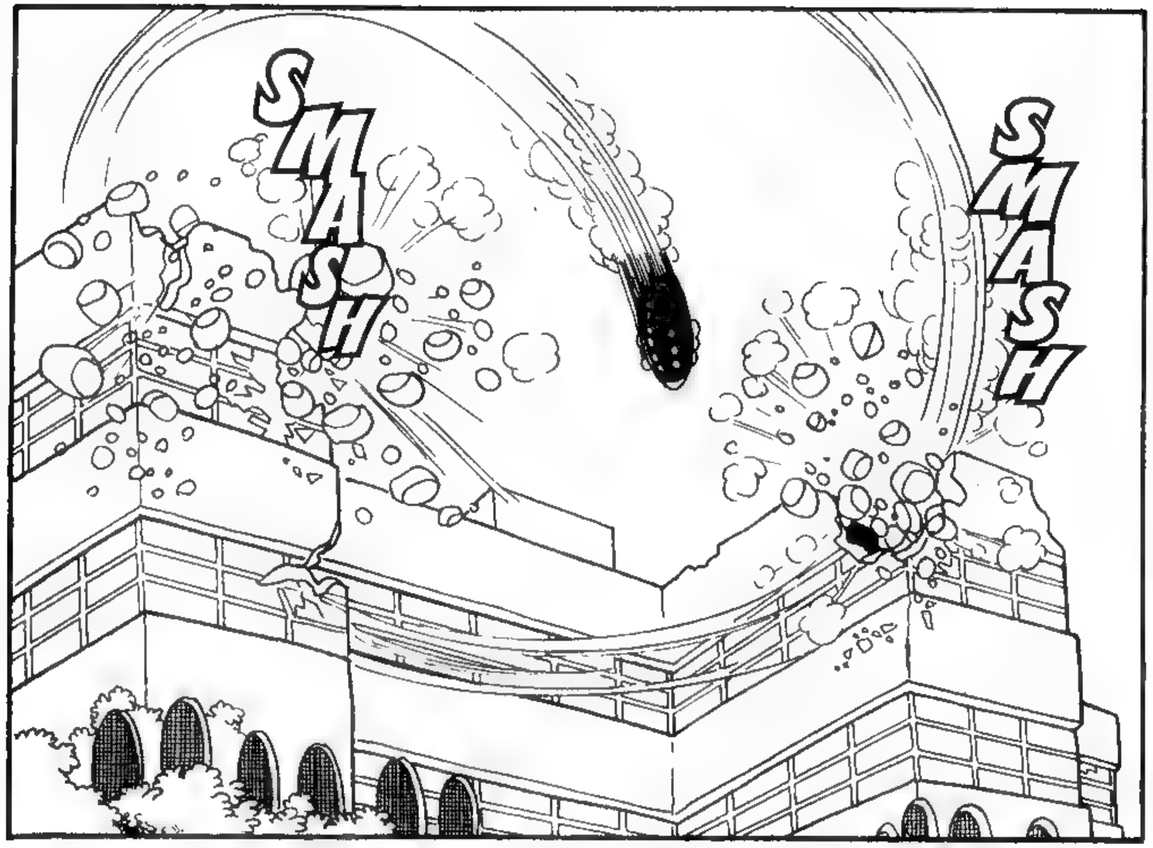
SCHOOL? WHERE IS YOUR SCHOOL?

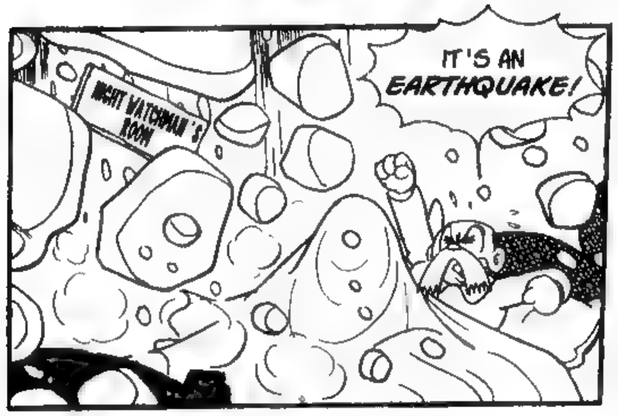
?

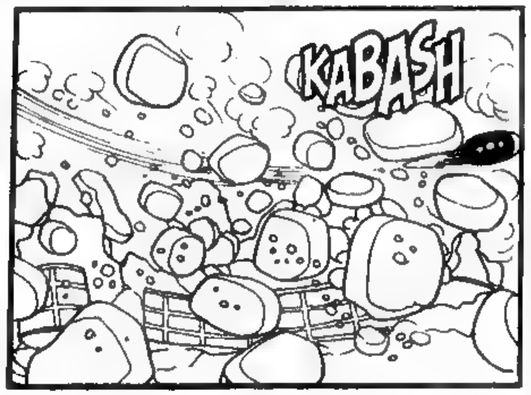
?

WHAT THE ---?!

OCHANOMIZU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL


SMASH
SMASH


NIGHT WATCHMAN'S ROOM
IT'S AN EARTHQUAKE!


KABASH

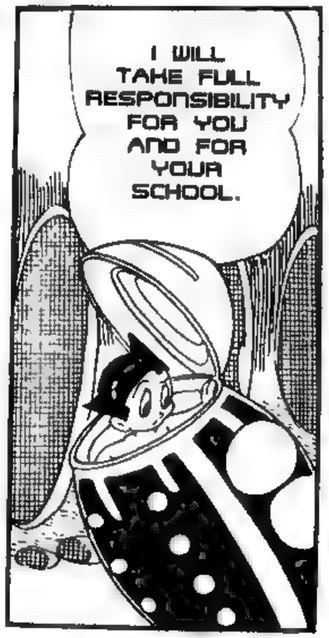
YOU ONLY GOT THE SCHOOL! NOT ME!
SOME EARTH-QUAKE YOU ARE!!

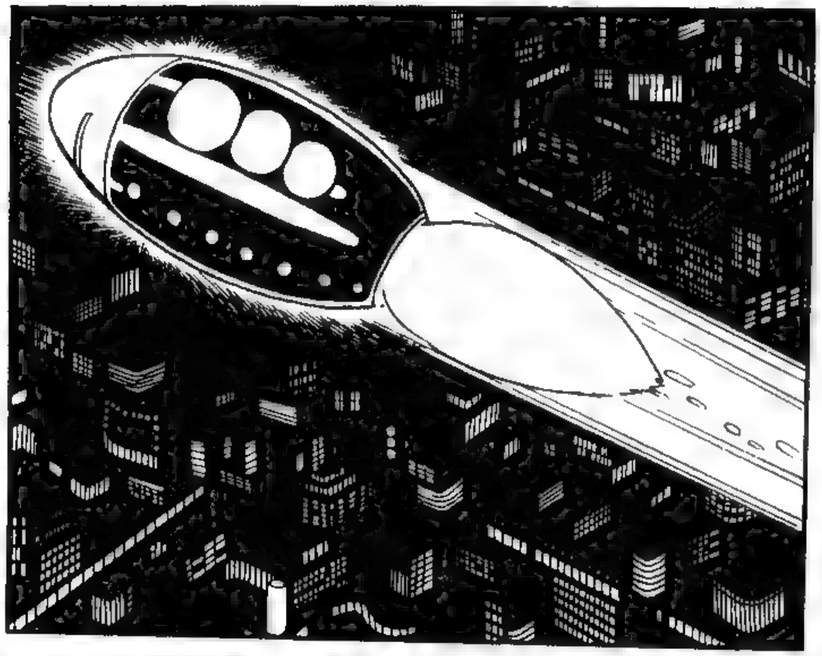
YOU WILL REBUILD THIS OLD SCHOOL. HERE, USE THIS MONEY TO BUILD A BETTER ONE!

WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?!

NOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE YOUR TEST TOMORROW.
WHAT?! BUT WHY?!

I SMASHED YOUR SCHOOL... BUT DON'T WORRY...
CLIMB INSIDE ME...
YOU GONNA BE OKAY, ASTRO?


I WILL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU AND FOR YOUR SCHOOL.



WE ARE ALMOST AT OUR DESTINATION ...

WE ARE NOW ABOUT TO ENTER THE ULTRA-GENGHIS KHAN EMPIRE...

WE HAVE AR-RIVED ...

GOSH, THAT WAS A LONG TRIP...

WE ARE DEEP BENEATH THE GOBI DESERT IN MONGOLIA...

WE ARE?!

I AM SORRY I DID NOT TELL YOU, BUT THE ULTRA GENGHIS KAHN EMPIRE IS UNDER THE GOBI DESERT...

WOW!!

WHAT LOOKS LIKE BLUE SKY IS REALLY A ROUNDED CEILING, PAINTED BLUE...

WOW! IT'S LOOKS JUST LIKE ABOVE GROUND, ONLY IT'S MORE AMAZING...

SHHH... THE MEN FROM THE RED-BLACK PARTY ARE PASSING...

TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP

TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP

WHAT IS THE RED-BLACK PARTY, ANYWAY?

SHH... THEY'RE THE DAMA PALACE GUARDS...

ROBO-G. I HAVE BROUGHT ASTRO BOY WITH ME...

AH, ASTRO BOY... COME IN...

LET'S GO TO ROBO-G'S PLACE. WE CAN TALK FREELY THERE...

S... SURE...

ROBO-G IS A FAMOUS SCHOLAR AND PHILOSOPHER, ASTRO...

I NEVER IMAGINED I WOULD MEET YOU, ASTRO BOY...

I HAVE HEARD MUCH ABOUT YOU, THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED ROBOT...

I AM SURE YOU'RE SURPRISED TO BE HERE...

I AM... I'D NEVER EVEN *HEARD* OF THIS COUNTRY...

IT IS NO WONDER ...

AFTER ALL, THE PEOPLE HERE LIVE LIKE ANTS, UNDERGROUND...

LIKE *ANTS?*

YES, SO MANY ASPECTS OF THEIR LIVES ARE JUST LIKE ANTS.

MOST PEOPLE HERE ARE FORCED TO WORK, LIKE WORKER ANTS...

AS FOR THE EMPEROR, HE IS A GREAT SCIENTIST, AND LIVES IN THAT PALACE THERE...

OF COURSE, ANYONE WHO TRIES TO RUN AWAY OR DEFY THE AUTHORITIES IS IMMEDIATELY KILLED.

B-BUT THAT'S AWFUL... WHY?

IT IS BECAUSE OF THE RED-BLACH PARTY, ASTRO BOY...

BUZZZ

WHAT'S THAT?!

BUZZZ

WE HAVE BEEN DETECTED BY THE PARTY TROOPERS!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

I KNOW! QUICK, HIDE ASTRO BOY!

USE OUR NORMAL METHOD!

VRRRRT

BZZZT

YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY HERE FOR AWHILE...

BLAAT

TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP

WE'VE GOT YOU, ROBOTS!!

.....

.....

WE KNOW YOU BROUGHT A JAPANESE ROBOT NAMED ASTRO BOY HERE! SO BRING HIM OUT, *NOW!*

HERE'S THE *PROOF!* WE SHOT THIS WITH A SECRET HIDDEN CAMERA!

SEARCH THE PLACE, MEN!

CONFESS, TIN MAN! CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE? ROBOTS'RE SUPPOSED TO OBEY ORDERS!

WELL, HERE I AM, AND I WON'T LET YOU SMASH HIM!!

OPEN YOUR MOUTH! SAY "AHH!"

IF NOT, I'LL HAVE TO *TAKE YOU APART!*

YIKES!

KRUMPKE

AIEE!

KACHANK

FWAP

KACHANK

HOW 'BOUT THAT?!

TRAITOR! DO YOU KNOW THE PUNISHMENT FOR ROBOTS WHO DEFY HUMANS?!

YOU BAD GUYS JUST GOT WHAT YOU DESERVE, THAT'S ALL!

BAD GUYS? HMPH... WE'LL TEACH YOU LATER WHO'S GOOD AND WHO'S BAD AROUND HERE....

ENOUGH GRUMBLING! TIME FOR YOU GUYS TO GO OUTSIDE!

HEY, LOOKEE!! THEY'RE HOLDING HANDS!!

SHADDUP, KID!!

IT IS NOT GOOD TO ANGER THE RED-BLACK PARTY, ASTRO BOY...

BUT IF I HADN'T DONE THAT, YOU WOULD'VE BEEN SMASHED!

IT'S IMPORTANT TO TEACH PEOPLE LIKE THAT A LESSON! WHA?!

HUMMMM

I HEAR A BOMB!

KA BOOOM

WOW, THAT WAS CLOSE! MUST BE THE RED-BLACK PARTY TRYING TO GET REVENGE!

I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW HORRIBLE THIS GOVERNMENT IS! WHY DOESN'T ANYONE PROTEST?

SOMEONE OUGHTA JUST TOPPLE THE BAD GUYS!

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW THE TERRIBLE POWER OF THE DAMA PALACE, ASTRO!

KASHUNK

KASHUNK

LOOK! A DAMA PALACE GUARD IS LOOKING FOR US!

SHHH... BE QUIET!

THREE MONSTER ROBOTS LIKE THAT LIVE IN THE DAMA PALACE, ASTRO... THE PEOPLE HATE THE EMPEROR, BUT THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING BECAUSE OF THEM

GOSH, WHO'D MAKE MONSTERS LIKE THAT?!

THE EMPEROR, THAT'S WHO...

SHWWWIP

IF ITS FEELERS FIND US, WE'RE DONE FOR!

CHK CHK CHK CHK

THEY SEARCH FOR REBELS LIKE THAT!!

SO IF WE DESTROY THE FEELERS, WE C'N PUT HIM OUT OF ACTION!

SHWIK

AIEE!

OH, NO YOU DON'T!

WATCH OUT, ASTRO!

SHWOOP

GAAA!

G'AAA!

SMASH

KER BASH

RATATATATATATA

CRACK

HOW'S IT FEEL TO HAVE NO FEELERS, EH?

SUBI SUBI

TRY'N CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!

... BUT NOW IT'S *MY* TURN!

KERAAAASH

VUIII

UH OH...

THE OTHER GUARD ROBOTS'RE COMING OUT NOW, ASTRO!

GA BO TTA GA BO GARAPORA GAPO!

GITCHAN GITCHAN GITCHAN GISHIRI GISSHIN GIRIGIRI GIRI

UH OH... I FORGOT THERE WERE *MORE* OF 'EM!

HOPE I HAVE ENOUGH *ENERGY!*

GABORA GABORA GABORA

OKAY, MONSTER-BOT!

I'M READY FOR YOU!

FWOP

FWOP FWOP

FWOOSH

HEAVING WEIRD STUFF LIKE THAT WON'T HELP YOU!

KER-SHNACK

FWOP FWOP FWOOSH

WHACK WHACK WHACK

KABASH

KER-SHNACK

UH OH... HE GOT ME!

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

A... ASTRO!!!

FSSSHH

KASHUNK
KASHUNK

THEY FINALLY GOT ASTRO, TOO...

LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE TAKING HIM INSIDE THE PALACE!

ONCE INSIDE, HE'S FINISHED!

WELL, ASTRO BOY.... DON'T EVEN *THINK* OF TRYING TO ESCAPE NOW!

HA HA HA! FOR ALL THE TALK ABOUT YOUR 100,000 HORSEPOWER, YOU LOOK LIKE A LIFELESS DOLL RIGHT NOW!

WHO'RE YOU 'N HOW COME YOU KNOW MY NAME?!

I'M IN CHARGE OF THE DAMA PALACE! I'M THE *EMPEROR* OF THE *ULTRA-GENGHIS KHAN EMPIRE!*

SO *YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO USES THOSE WEIRD MONSTERS TO TERRORIZE PEOPLE!!

MONSTERS? HA HA! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

THOSE 'RE *ROBOTS*, PAL! ROBOTS LIKE YOU! AND I *MADE* THEM!

I'M A SCIENTIST, TOO...

IT WAS CHILD'S PLAY FOR ME TO MAKE THEM!

RIGHT NOW, MY COUNTRY IS HIDDEN BENEATH THE DESERT...

...BUT WHEN THE TIME COMES, THE ULTRA-GENGHIS KAHN EMPIRE WILL CONQUER THE *WHOLE WORLD!*

FWP

CHAK

YOU *EVIL* MAN! YOU'LL *NEVER* BE ABLE TO DO IT!

HMPMH... LET ME DEMONSTRATE MY AWESOME POWER!

BEHOLD! THESE ARE *ARTIFICIAL BEES*, FILLED WITH *POISON!!*

WE HAVE THE MOST ADVANCED WEAPONS IN THE WORLD!

THEY CAN STOP HUMANS AND ANIMALS DEAD IN THEIR TRACKS!!

WE'LL USE THEM TO SPREAD THEIR POISON OVER THE GLOBE. IT WILL CREATE INSTANT *HAVOC!*

WE'RE MAKING THE POISON BEES IN THE PALACE HERE *RIGHT NOW!* HOW ABOUT THAT, ASTRO BOY?

EVENTUALLY I'LL HAVE *YOU* MODIFIED INTO ONE OF MY PALACE GUARD ROBOTS. A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO LOOK FORWARD TO! *HA HA HAH!*

BLAST IT! I'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE...

ARGH...

IT'S NO USE! I'M RUNNING OUT OF *ENERGY...!*

BUZZZZ

WHAT THE--?

IT'S A *BEE!*

WONDER IF IT'S MAN-MADE...?

IF IT IS, IT'S A *GIFT FROM HEAVEN...*

FLASH

BZZZZ

ATTA BOY... COME OVER HERE!

GOTCHA!

CLACK

I GOT HIM!

WOW, IT *WAS* A MAN-MADE BEE...

FLICKER...

HEH HEH... I'LL JUST BORROW A LITTLE OF THIS ARTIFICIAL BEE'S ENERGY!

ALL OF IT IN FACT!

IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT I FEEL BETTER ALREADY...

THAT MUST BE AN ENERGY REPLENISHER OVER THERE.... GOTTA TRY TO BREAK AWAY FROM THIS IRON CIRCLE 'N GET OVER *THERE!*

MUST BE SOME WAY I CAN FOOL THESE MONSTERS *GUARDING* ME!

IN THE MEANTIME, THE RED-BLACK PARTY MEMBERS WERE BUSY ROUNDING UP AND SMASHING ROBOTS WHEREVER THEY COULD FIND THEM...

YOU A ROBOT?

UH... YES...

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

OKAY, MEN! THE EMPEROR'S ORDERED US TO DESTROY ANY ROBOT CAPABLE OF REVOLTING!

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

YOU TWO'RE NOW MOBILIZED! STOMP OUT ANY ROBOT REBELS IN THE CITY!

GYAAAA

KASHUNK

KASHUNK

THINK WE C'N LEAVE HIM WITHOUT A GUARD?

DON'T WORRY! HE CAN'T MOVE AN INCH LIKE THAT!

CHZZZ

WE *BLEW* IT!

HELP! SOMEBODY *HELP!*

ACK! HE'S *MOVING!*

JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME!

RATATATATAT

AIEEE!!!

YAY! I'VE GOT MY STRENGTH BACK!

ALL 100,000 HORSE-POWER!

OKAY, YOU FAKE EMPEROR!

HERE I COME, READY OR NOT!

SO THIS IS WHERE THE RED-BLACK PARTY MEMBERS HANG OUT! TIME TO GO AT IT, GUYS!

TAKE THIS!

OW!
OW!
OUCH!

YOW!

NOW FOR THE EMPEROR!

KABASH

WHAT THE--?

DON'T TELL ME YOU KIDS WERE ALL *ABDUCTED?!*

HAALP!

DON'T BE AFRAID! I'M A ROBOT! I'M HERE TO *HELP* YOU!

HOW COME THEY SHUT YOU GUYS UP IN HERE?

WE'RE ALL TEN YEARS OLD!

THE LAW SAYS THAT AT TEN...

... WE ALL HAVE TO HAVE OPERATIONS TO GIVE US THE SAME FACE....

ONE LIKE THIS...

B-BUT WHY?

'CUZ WORKER ANTS ARE ALL S'POSED TO LOOK THE *SAME*...

WELL, DON'T WORRY, KIDS... I WON'T LET 'EM DO THAT TO YOU... FOLLOW ME...

THIS PALACE SURE IS COMPLI-CATED...

HMM... I CAN HEAR SOMETHING LIKE A GIANT BEE *HUM*... IT'S NOT A ROBO-BEE SOUND, THOUGH...

WOW... THAT'S A GIANT *BEE HIVE!!*

BUT *WHY* WOULD IT BE HERE?

WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT'RE THOSE HUMANS DOING?

STING STING STING

GOSH, THEY'RE EACH BEING *STUNG* ONCE IN THE *NECK!*

YIKES!

BZZZT

BZZZT BZZZT BZZZT

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ALL THESE MONSTER BEES?!

ACK! THIS GIVES ME THE *CREEPS!*

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS! YOUR STINGS DON'T HURT ME!!

THERE HE IS, MEN!!

IT'S *ASTRO BOY!* GET HIM! HE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE IN HERE!

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

TIME TO BREAK UP THIS *HIVE!!*

BLAST! HE SMASHED THE HIVE!

W-WE'RE DOOMED, EMPEROR!

NO ESCAPE, EMPEROR! IT'S ONE-ON-ONE WITH ME, NOW!

NO! I'VE STILL GOT SOMETHING UP MY SLEEVE!

KACHANK

BZZZ BZZZZ BZZZ BZZ

HOW ABOUT THAT, ASTRO BOY? IT'S THE GUARDIAN DIETY OF ALL BEES! AND HE'S ANGRY, AT YOU!

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

FUAAARGH

YIKES!

FWP

WHOOPS ...

SHWP

UH OH... IT'S A MAG-RAY!

SEWIP

KABAAM

HOW ABOUT *THIS?!*

AIEEE!

KVOOOSH

RUN FOR IT! EVERYTHING'S ON *FIRE!*

NO ESCAPE, GUYS!

}HMPH€... IMAGINE FINDING THE EMPEROR, OUT LIKE A COLD FISH...

BUT I'VE STILL GOTTA MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T FRY TO DEATH...

IT'S THE DUTY OF ROBOTS LIKE ME TO HELP PEOPLE IN TROUBLE...

... EVEN *BAD GUYS* LIKE YOU...

YOU'RE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT NOW, MR. EMPEROR...

GOOD! YOU'VE COME TO! BUT WHAT'S THIS STRANGE LOOK ON YOUR FACE?

WH... WHERE AM I...?

YOU'RE IN THE *DAMA PALACE!*

B-BUT WHO ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

I...DON'T REMEMBER A THING!

B...BUT YOU'RE THE EMPEROR, AND THIS IS YOUR PALACE, RIGHT?

AND BY THE WAY, WHAT'S WITH ALL THOSE *BEES?* WHY'RE YOU RAISING THEM?

BEES? NOW I REMEMBER! THEY MADE ME INTO A *SLAVE!*

WAIT A MINUTE... I DON'T GET IT! YOU'RE A *SLAVE* OF THE *BEES?*

RIGHT! THE BEES *STING* PEOPLE, TURN THEM INTO *SLAVES,* AND THEN *USE* THEM! THAT'S WHAT THEY MUST'VE DONE TO ME!

THEY'VE *ALL* GOT TO BE DESTROYED! OTHERWISE THEY'RE A TERRIBLE THREAT TO MANKIND!

REALLY? GOSH, I HAD NO IDEA!

UH OH... THERE'S STILL SOME BEES OUT THERE!

NO ESCAPE FOR YOU GUYS!

CITIZENS! EVACUATE TO THE SURFACE!

THIS IS THE EMPEROR SPEAKING!! I WAS BEING MANIPULATED, BUT NOW I'M NOT! FORGIVE ME FOR THE WAY I HAVE TREATED YOU!

THE BEES HAVE BEEN STINGING HUMANS AND TURNING THEM INTO SLAVES!

EVERYONE MUST EVACUATE TO THE SURFACE BEFORE THE BEES CAN ATTACK AGAIN!

WH-WHAT DID YOU DO, ASTRO?

I SET A BOMB IN THE PALACE...

IT'LL BLOW UP SOON, SO BE CAREFUL...

KABABBOOOOOM

ROAR

RUMBLE

CRASH

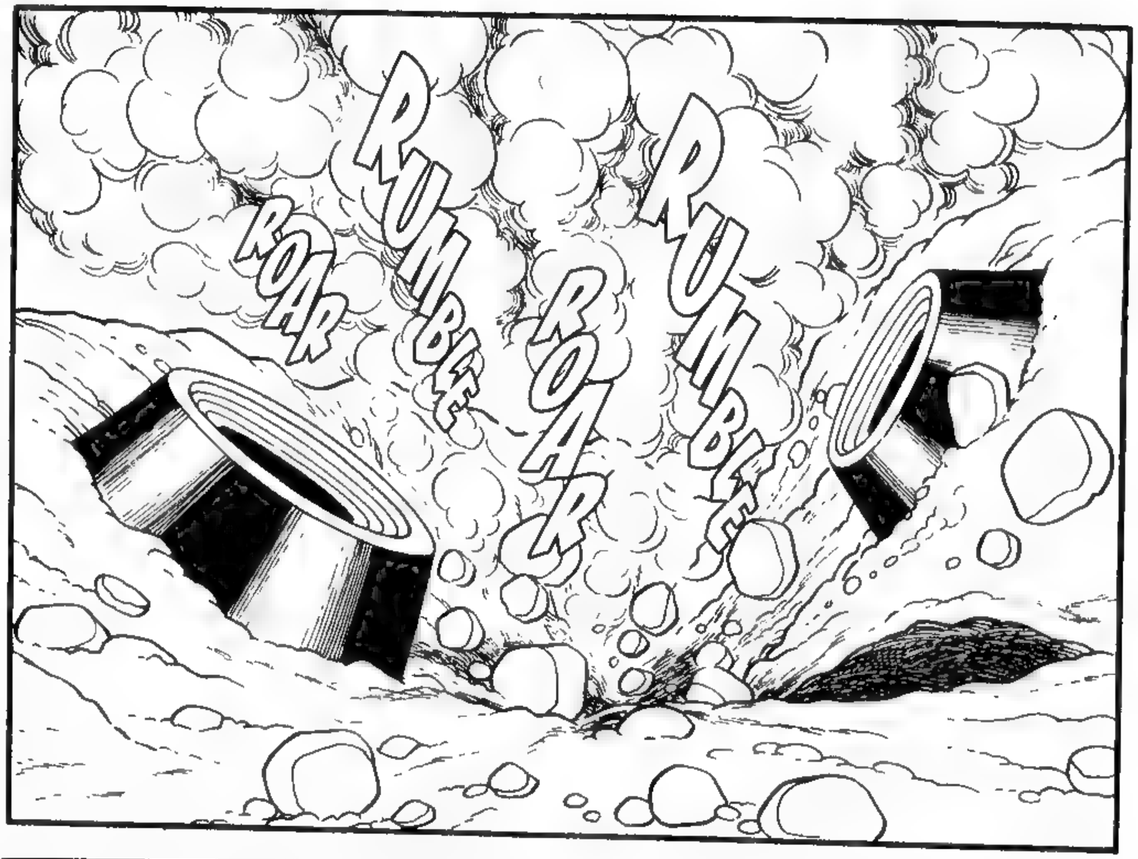
ROAR

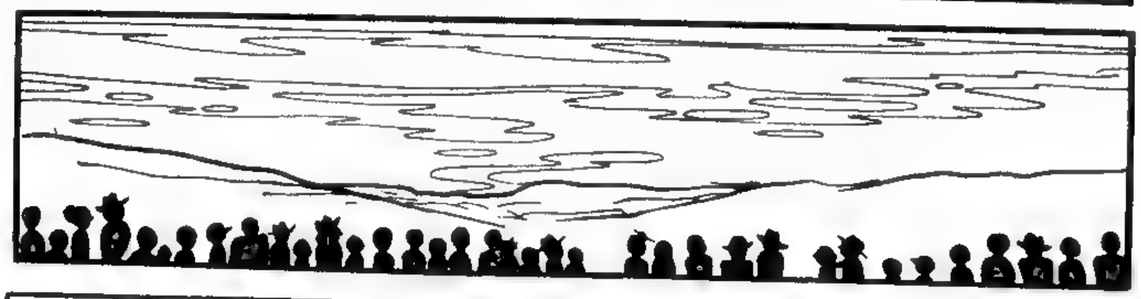
RUMBLE

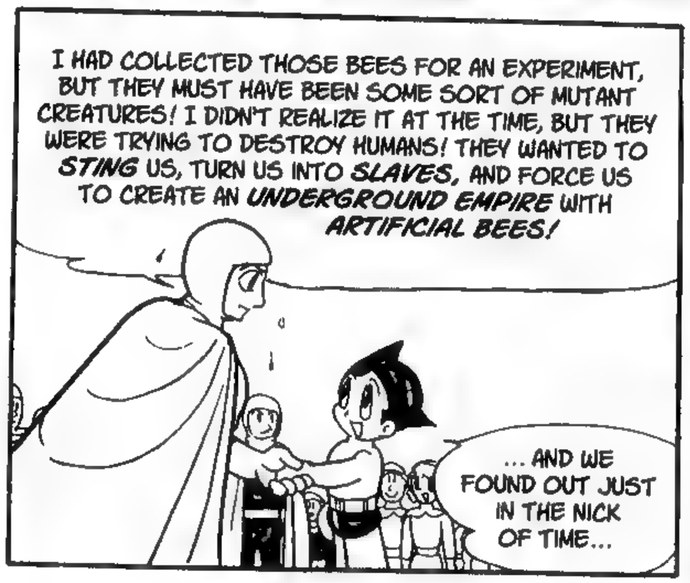
CRUMBLE

RUMBLE
CRASH
THE UNDERGROUND CITY'S BEING *DE-STROYED!* AND A *GOOD THING!* IT WAS AN *AWFUL* PLACE...
THE DAMA PALACE, THE ROBOTS, AND THE BEES'LL ALL BE PERMANENTLY *BURIED* UNDER GROUND...

RRROAR
RRUMBLE
CRASH


RUMBLE
ROAR
RUMBLE
ROAR




I HAD COLLECTED THOSE BEES FOR AN EXPERIMENT, BUT THEY MUST HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF MUTANT CREATURES! I DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THE TIME, BUT THEY WERE TRYING TO DESTROY HUMANS! THEY WANTED TO *STING* US, TURN US INTO *SLAVES*, AND FORCE US TO CREATE AN *UNDERGROUND EMPIRE* WITH *ARTIFICIAL BEES!*
... AND WE FOUND OUT JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME...

WE'LL FINALLY BE ABLE TO LIVE IN PEACE NOW, THANKS TO *YOU*, ASTROBOY!
G'BYE, EVERY-BODY! HERE'S WISHING YOU AND YOUR NEW COUNTRY THE BEST!

FORTRESS OF THE CENTAURS

First serialized from May to July 1958 in *Shonen* magazine.

CLACK CLACK

CLACK CLACK

KACHOMP

MUNCH MUNCH

CLACK CLACK

CLACK CLACK

CHOMP CHOMP

PTOOEY

SMASH

HEY, GUYS! THERE'S A *MONSTER* ON THE WAY HERE!

'N I'M NOT KIDDING! *HONEST!*

HE ATE A *SOCCER BALL!!* HE'LL PROLLY EAT OUR *TEACHER*, TOO!

EEEK!!

TOO BAD, TAMAO, BUT I'M STILL HERE...

AHEM... LET ME INTRODUCE OUR NEW PUPIL, BOYS 'N GIRLS. HIS NAME'S *KURITARO DON*, AND HE GOES BY THE NICKNAME OF *"ACORN"*...

HIS FAMILY RUNS A RANCH IN A PLACE CALLED MEMANBETSU, ON HOKKAIDO ISLAND IN THE NORTH!

...SO HE'S NOT A REAL MONSTER...

WHA P!

LOOK!

WOW! HE'S EATING *CHALK!*

NO EATING DURING CLASS TIME! 'N THAT MEANS *CHALK*, TOO!

SO SORRY, TEACHER .....

YOU'RE FORGIVEN THIS TIME. TAKE A SEAT NEXT TO ASTRO.

OW! THAT *HURT!*

!

SO SORRY...

YOU SEE HIM APOLOGIZE? WHAT A *WIMP!*

YEAH... NOT WHAT I THOUGHT...

UM... HERE'S A PENCIL FOR YA TA EAT...

HEH HEH... THIS NUT'LL EAT ANYTHING!

HERE'S A RAG USED TO CLEAN THE TOILET...

HEY! KNOCK IT OFF!

THAT'S BEING CRUEL, GUYS!!

WHAT'S IT TO YOU, KEN?

I SAID, KNOCK IT OFF!

HEY! JUST 'CUZ YOU'RE CLASS PRESIDENT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN ORDER US AROUND!

KEN'S RIGHT, SHIB...

HERE, *I'LL* EAT ANYTHING YOU GIVE ME!

HEE HEE...

HMPH!... ROBOTS'RE *BORING!*

TEE HEE...

THANKS, ASTRO! YOU SAVED THE DAY!

HEY, GUYS! IT'S P.E. TIME!

ASSEMBLE OVER HERE, BOYS 'N GIRLS!

I WANT YOU TO VAULT OFF THAT SPRING BOX 'N JUMP OVER THE HIGH BAR. ACORN, YOU GO FIRST!

THINK HE C'N GET OFF THE GROUND?

SPRONG

WHA ???

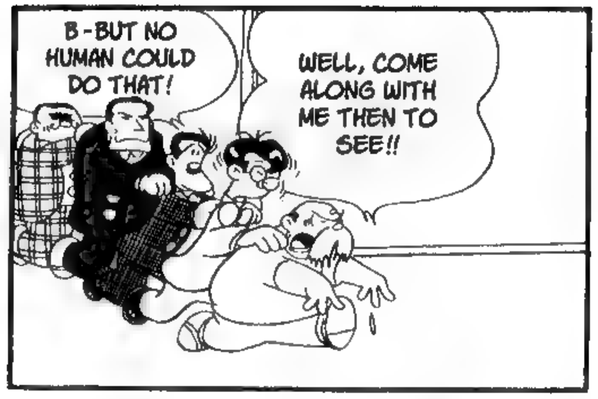
WHOOOOP!

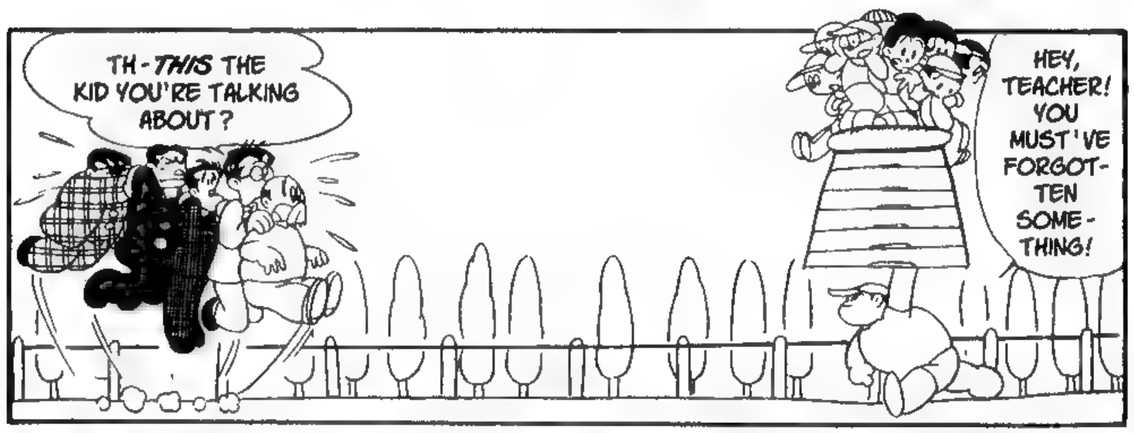
WHEEEEE!

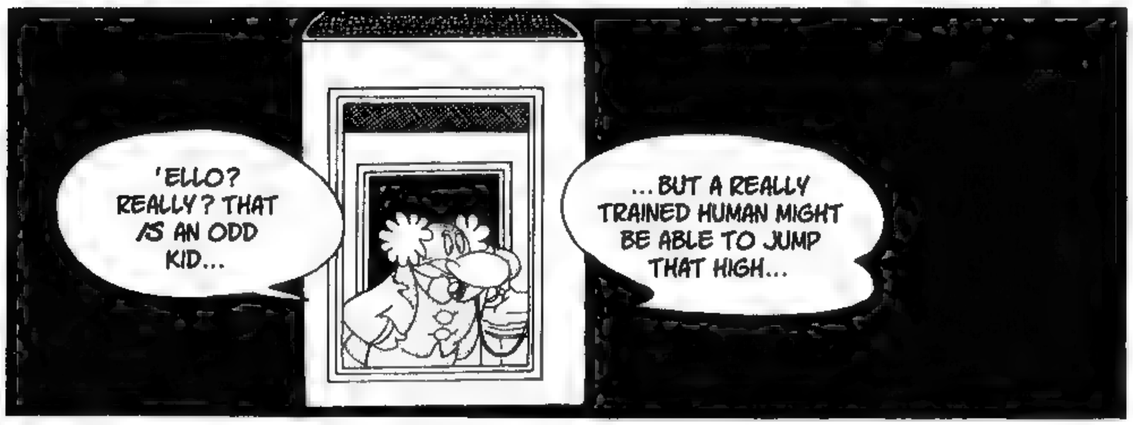
G-GUESS WHAT?! THAT NEW KID IN MY CLASS JUST JUMPED *NINE FEET!*

AW, C'MON, MUSTACHIO... ONLY A *ROBOT* COULD DO THAT...

DID HE HAVE A PHYSICAL EXAM?
HEY! I KNOW HE'S A HUMAN, OKAY?

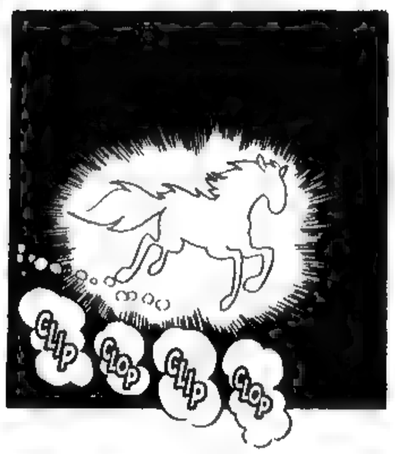

B-BUT NO HUMAN COULD DO THAT!
WELL, COME ALONG WITH ME THEN TO SEE!!


TH-THIS THE KID YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?
HEY, TEACHER! YOU MUST'VE FORGOT-TEN SOME-THING!


'ELLO? REALLY? THAT AS AN ODD KID...
...BUT A REALLY TRAINED HUMAN MIGHT BE ABLE TO JUMP THAT HIGH...

UM, WAIT A SEC, MUSTACHIO...
PHONE

I HEAR STRANGE FOOTSTEPS...
CLIP CLOP CLIPCLIP


CLIP
CLOP
CLIP
CLOP

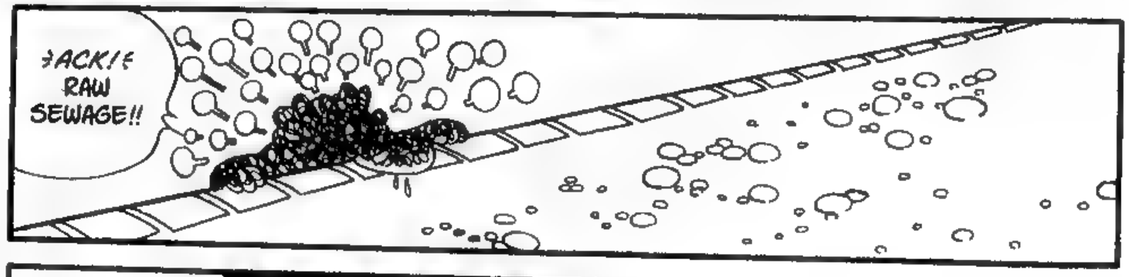
CLIP CLOP CLIPCLIP CLOP

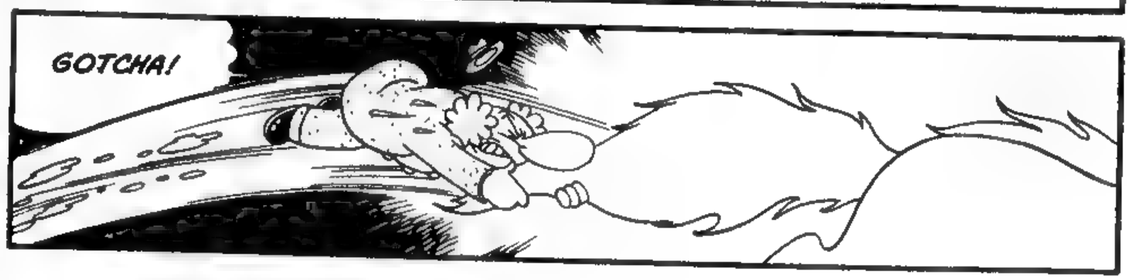
THAT'S AN AWFULLY STRANGE HORSE....

ON SECOND THOUGHT, I WONDER IF IT'S A REAL HORSE OR AN APPARITION?!

I'LL TRY'N CUT HIM OFF BY THE ROAD HERE 'N CATCH HIM!

KAVOOOSH


ACK!! RAW SEWAGE!!


GOTCHA!

I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU GO, HORSIE!

OW! OW! OW!

KAPOW!

KERSPLOOSH!

HANG ON! STOP THE CAR FOR A SEC'!

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE. LET'S HELP THE POOR GUY OUT...

WELL, WELL, WELL... IF IT ISN'T *PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU!!*

UNGHF... WH-WHO ARE YOU?

ME? *AKABOSHI*, PRESIDENT OF *THE RED STAR WEEKLY* PAPER... WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

I... I WAS KICKED BY A... A... *HORSE*... THERE WAS A WEIRD HORSE OVER THERE...

WHO EVER HEARD OF A HORSE WALKING AROUND *TOKYO* AT NIGHT?!

B-BUT I *WASN'T* DREAMING! IT WAS A STRANGE HORSE... ALL WHITE, WITH A GLOWING MANE!!

HA HA HAH... YOU MUST'VE BEEN *DREAMING* PROFESSOR...

WHA?! YOU FOUND MY BRIEFCASE BUT IT WAS *OPEN?*

IT WAS RIGHT HERE, SIR...

B-BUT I'D *LOCKED* IT!! WHAT'S GOING ON?

I HAD IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS IN HERE!

HUH?! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

SOMEBODY'S SOLVED A PROBLEM I WAS WORKING ON!

SOMEBODY MUST'VE RIFLED THROUGH YOUR STUFF, PROFESSOR...

B-BUT HOW COULD ANYONE SOLVE A PROBLEM THIS COMPLEX?!

YOU KNOW, PROFESSOR... THIS COULD BE *VERY BIG NEWS...*

WHAT DO YOU SAY? I'LL HAVE MY COMPANY SEARCH FOR THE HORSE....

... IN EXCHANGE, YOU KEEP QUIET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT, OK?!

LATER, AT *THE RED STAR WEEKLY* ...

MORNING, MR. PRESIDENT, SIR...

GET EVERYONE TOGETHER FOR A MEETING! ON THE DOUBLE!

...SO THAT'S WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING, MEN... I NEED EVERYONE TO TRY 'N FIND THE HORSE'S REAL IDENTIFY...

THIS IS *TOP PRIORITY!* ALL OTHER WORK'S GOTTA BE SHELVED!

B-BUT BOSS... DO YOU REALLY THINK USING *ALL* OF US TO HUNT FOR A *HORSE* IS A GOOD IDEA? THE OTHER WORK'S IMPORTANT, TOO...

IT'S AN *ORDER*, LUNKHEAD! WHEN I SAY "DO IT", *DO IT! NOW!*

IT'S HIT-THE-STREET TIME!

TUMBLEDY BUMP BUMP

REPORTING TO BASE! FOUND A VAGRANT WHO SAYS HE SAW THE HORSE!

REPORTING TO BASE! FOUND A HORSE HAIR!

ZZZIP

WE'RE HERE TA SEE YOU, AKABOSHI ...

WELL, WELL, WELL... IF IT ISN'T *MIKAZUKI*, DON OF THE *CRESCENT MOON GANG...*

LISTEN, AKABOSHI... I'VE GOT A BONE TA PICK WITH YOU...

HIC

BUT WHAT WOULD THE CRESCENT MOON GANG HAVE AGAINST ME?

I'M SURE YOU KNOW!

WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING... CHASING AFTER A HORSE, NEGLECTING YOUR REAL JOB?!

LISTEN, AKABOSHI! WHO D'YOU THINK PROVIDES THE PROTECTION FOR YOU TO DO YOUR WORK IN THIS WORLD?!

WITHOUT OUR HELP--THE HELP OF THE CRESCENT MOON GANG--YOU'RE *TOAST!* GOT IT?

=HIC=

FLICK

AH SHADDUP, MIKAZUKI! I'VE GOT MY *OWN* PLANS FOR THIS!

SLAM BAM BAM CLANK CRASH

FWP

SHWAK

SEE THAT MAP THERE, MIKAZUKI? THE HORSE'LL APPEAR IN THAT REGION!

BUT DON'T WORRY... THIS HORSE IS LIKE THE *GOOSE THAT LAYS GOLDEN EGGS*--IT'LL MAKE US RICH TO THE TUNE OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF YEN!

IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT!

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED...

IT'S TWO A.M.!

QUIET, GUYS... I THINK I HEAR HORSES' HOOVES...

READY WITH THE LASSO HERE...

HERE HE COMES!

WHOA... THAT'S NO *ORDIN-ARY* CLIP CLOP ...

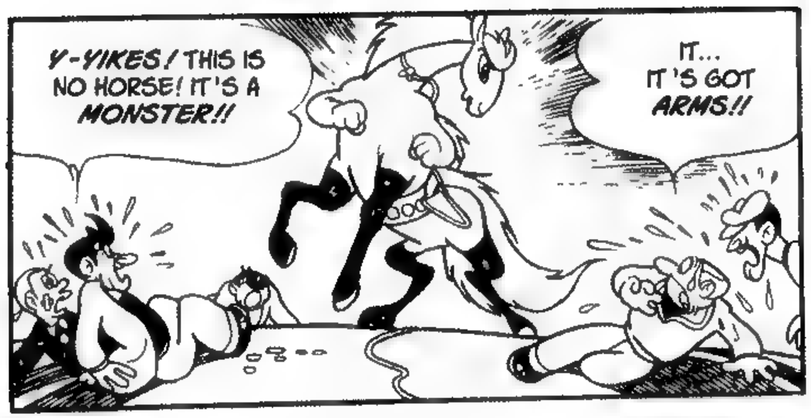
GOTCHA!!

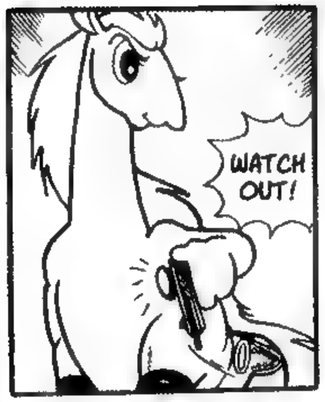
GET 'IM, BOYS !!

HOLD HIM DOWN!!

HEY! WHO'S CHOKING ME?!

OWWWW!


Y-YIKES! THIS IS NO HORSE! IT'S A MONSTER!!
IT... IT'S GOT ARMS!!


WATCH OUT!

RUN FOR IT! HAALP!
FSSSHT

CLOPPITY CLOP CLOP CLOP

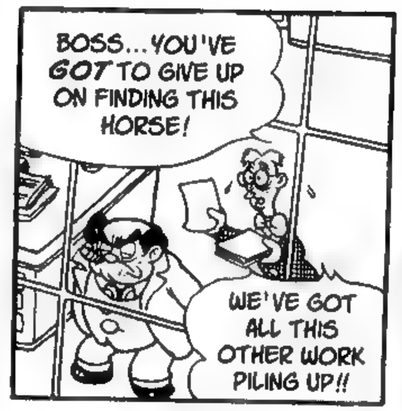
WHAT?! B-BUT I SENT YOU GUYS TO THE PARK LAST NIGHT TO CATCH THE HORSE!!
WHADDAYOUMEAN, YOU ALL FELL ASLEEP AND NOBODY REMEMBERS WHAT HAPPENED?! WHAT'S GOING ON?!!

WE THINK THE HORSE APPEARED...
...B-BUT WE'RE NOT REALLY SURE...

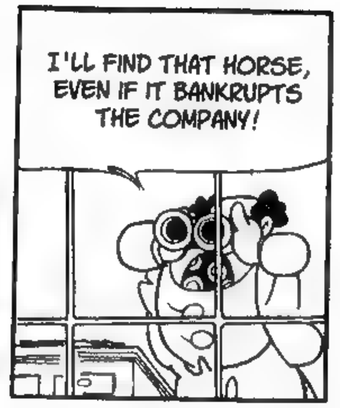
YOU USELESS SCUM! GO WASH UP 'N TRY AGAIN!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO REMEMBERS WHAT HAPPENED?
YESSIR... THE HORSE SPRAYED US WITH SOME GAS... THEN EVERYONE LOST CONSCIOUS-NESS!

YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?!!

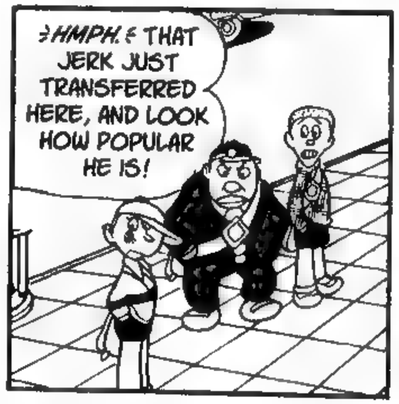

BOSS... YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE UP ON FINDING THIS HORSE!
WE'VE GOT ALL THIS OTHER WORK PILING UP!!

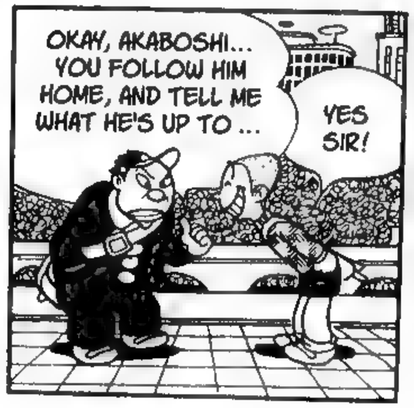
AW, SHADDUP, WILL YOU? YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS IS NO ORDINARY HORSE! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP SEARCHING FOR HIM!


I'LL FIND THAT HORSE, EVEN IF IT BANKRUPTS THE COMPANY!

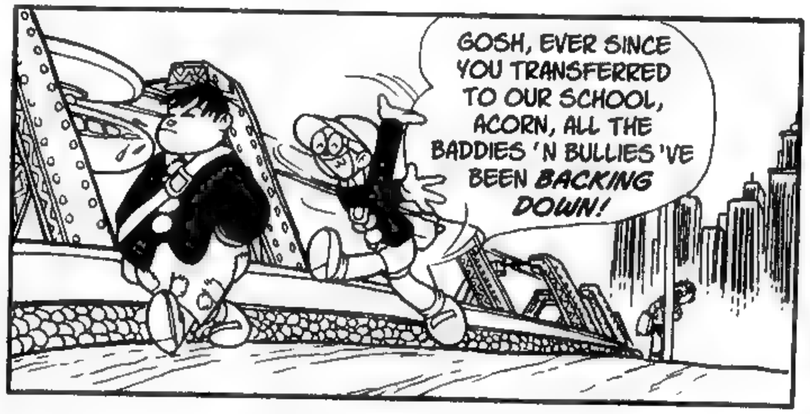
HEY, ACORN!

GOSH, YOU SURE ARE STRONG!
LIKE A SUMO WRESTLER, HEY!


HMPH.E THAT JERK JUST TRANSFERRED HERE, AND LOOK HOW POPULAR HE IS!


OKAY, AKABOSHI... YOU FOLLOW HIM HOME, AND TELL ME WHAT HE'S UP TO ...
YES SIR!

LEAVE IT TO ME, SHIB!


GOSH, EVER SINCE YOU TRANSFERRED TO OUR SCHOOL, ACORN, ALL THE BADDIES 'N BULLIES 'VE BEEN BACKING DOWN!

LATER, TAMAO....

HOW'D YOU GET TO BE SO *STRONG*, ACORN? I WANNA KNOW....

LATER, TAMAO...

I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHERE HE LIVES 'N WHAT HE DOES TO GET THAT TOUGH...

SO *THAT'S* WHERE HE LIVES...

I'M HOME, GRANNY...

YOU'VE GOT AN ODD GUEST, ACORN....

WHO IS IT?

IT... IT'S.... ER...

SLIDE

WHAT THE --P!

NUU!!

I WAS AFRAID YOU YOU'D FORGOTTEN ME, ACORN!

I'M SO *BESIDE* MYSELF, I CAN'T STAND UP!

DON'T WORRY, GRANNY... THIS IS *NUU*, HERE. HE'S A FRIEND FROM WHEN I WAS IN HOKKAIDO!

AH, ACORN... I SEARCHED ALL OVER FOR YOU!

TO THINK YOU MADE IT ALL THE WAY FROM HOKKAIDO...

AS SOON AS I HEARD YOU WERE IN TOKYO, I STARTED SEARCHING...

CAN WE TREAT NUU TO SOME CARROTS, GRANNY?

I'M SO GLAD I *FOUND* YOU!

I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T LOST THE POWER I SHOWED YOU IN HOKKAIDO...

DON'T WORRY, NUU! IT'S ALL RIGHT HERE!

MAKE SURE YOU DON'T WASTE IT, ACORN...

YOU HAVE THE *POWER*, BUT NOT THE *WISDOM* TO CONTROL IT YET...

I CANNOT LEAVE YOU UNTIL I HAVE TAUGHT YOU EVERYTHING...

IT'S A *HORSE GHOST!*

HAALP!!

IT'S A *HORSE GHOST!!!*

A H-*HORSE GHOST!* A G-*GHOST HORSE!*

A *WHAT* HORSE?

IT... IT'S GOT HANDS AND TALKS, DAD!!

TELL ME WHERE YOU SAW THAT THING, SON! *WHERE?!*

GOSH, DAD... I... DIDN'T MEAN TO...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THAT HORSE ALL OVER!!

SLAM

FINALLY, I FIND OUT WHERE THE THING'S BEEN HIDING!!

HELLO? MIKAZUKI? LISTEN, I NEED SEVEN OR EIGHT ABLE-BODIED YOUNG MEN FROM YOUR GANG HERE IN A HURRY... I NEED THEM TO TAKE SOMEBODY *HOSTAGE...*

DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON, BUT I DON'T LIKE THE WAY THESE GUYS WHO'VE SURROUNDED ME *LOOK....*

FWOOSH

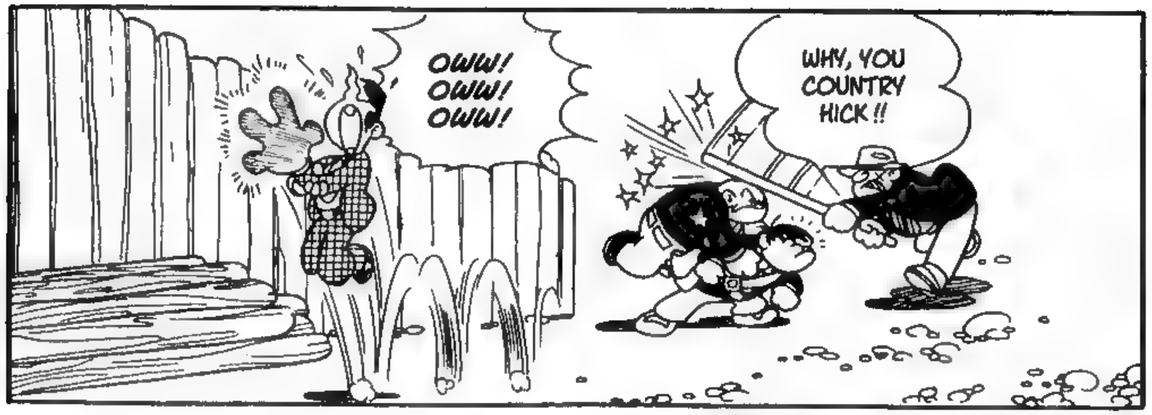
HERE WE GO...

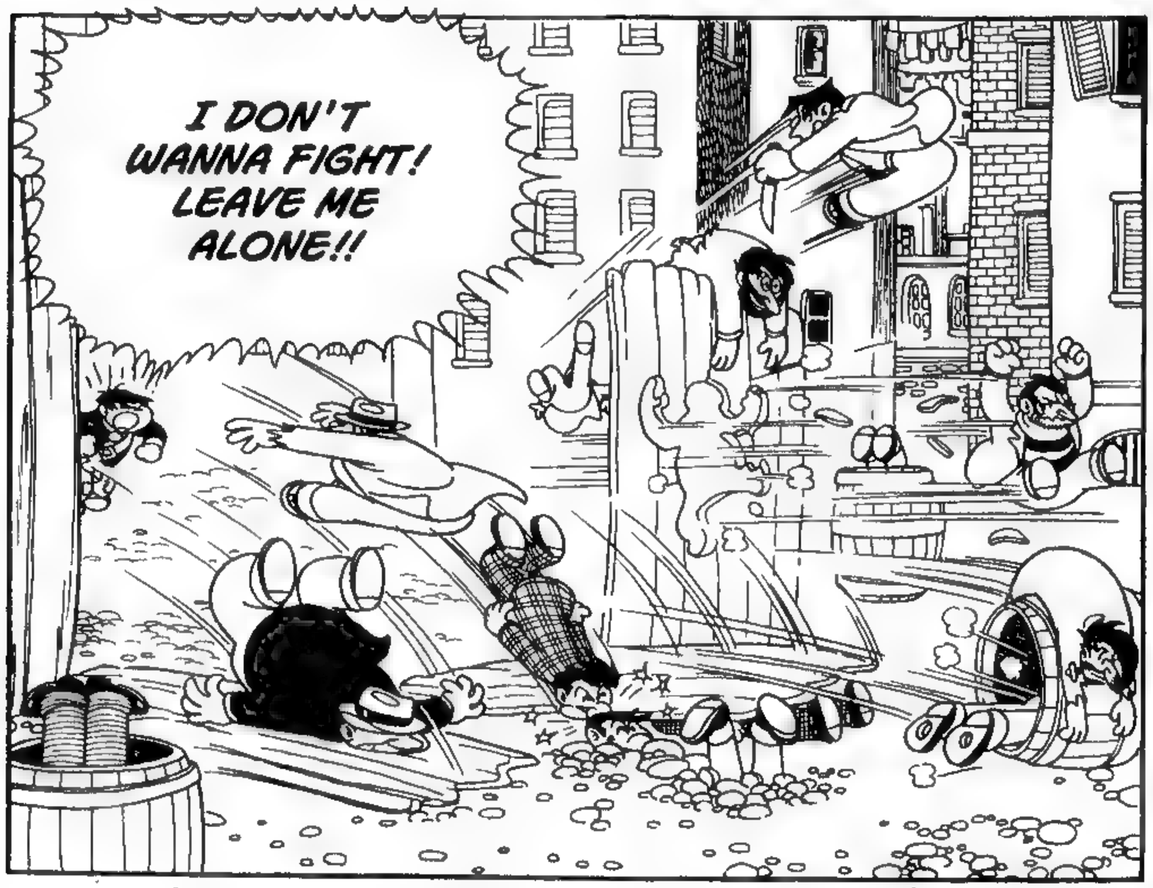
NOT SO EASY, ACORN-HEAD....

WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE... YOU'RE COMING WITH *US...*

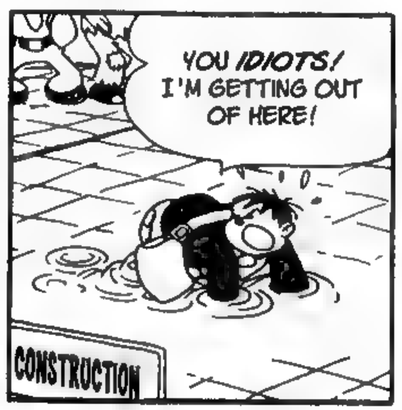
TAKE THIS!

SLAM

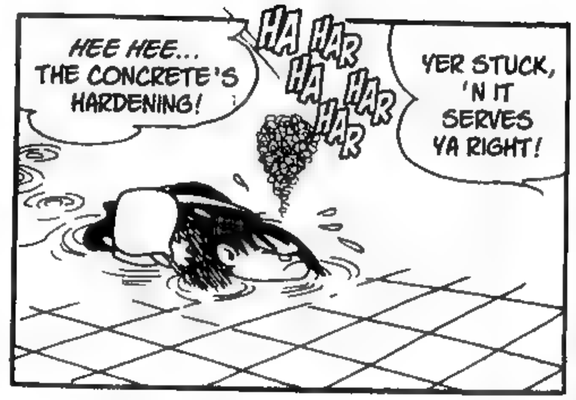

OWW!
OWW!
OWW!
WHY, YOU COUNTRY HICK!!

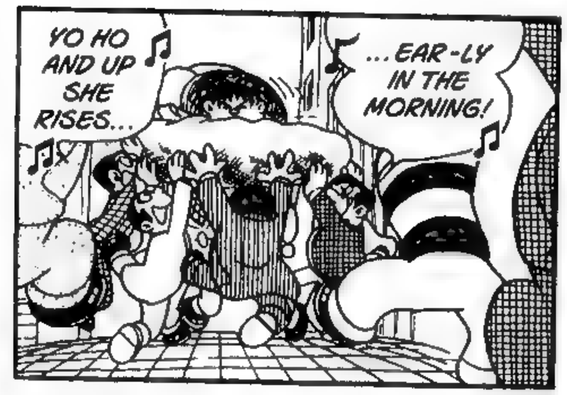

I DON'T WANNA FIGHT! LEAVE ME ALONE!!

HERE YA GO!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!


YOU IDIOTS! I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!
CONSTRUCTION

GETTING OUT? JUST TRY!!


HEE HEE... THE CONCRETE'S HARDENING!
HA HAR HA HAR HAR
YER STUCK, 'N IT SERVES YA RIGHT!


YO HO AND UP SHE RISES...
...EAR-LY IN THE MORNING!

HERE HE IS, BOSS...

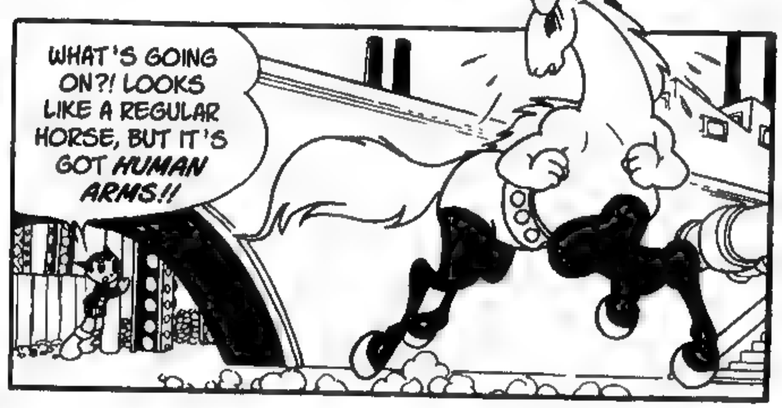
GOOD WORK MEN! WE'VE GOT THE PERFECT BAIT TO LURE THE HORSE HERE!
SO THIS IS THE KID WHO WAS TALKING TO THE HORSE, EH?

TWO OR THREE DAYS LATER...
GOSH, SURE IS STRANGE THAT ACORN SUDDENLY STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL ...

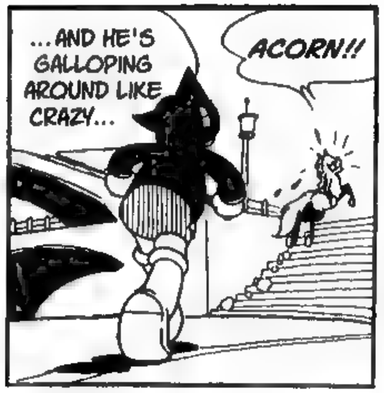
THEY SAY HE DISAPPEARED AROUND HERE....

WHAT A SEC'... SEEMS LIKE I HEAR SOMEONE CALLING HIS NAME!

WHAT?! IT'S A HORSE!!


WHAT'S GOING ON?! LOOKS LIKE A REGULAR HORSE, BUT IT'S GOT HUMAN ARMS!!

IT MUST BE ONE OF THOSE THOSE HALF-MAN, HALF-HORSE GODS IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY— A CENTAUR...

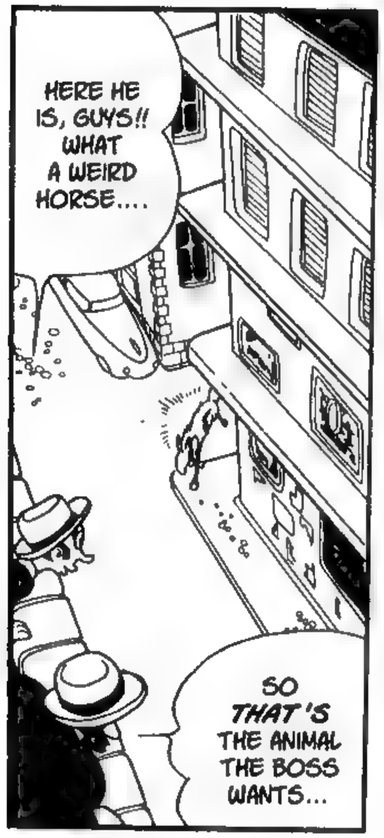

...AND HE'S GALLOPING AROUND LIKE CRAZY...
ACORN!!

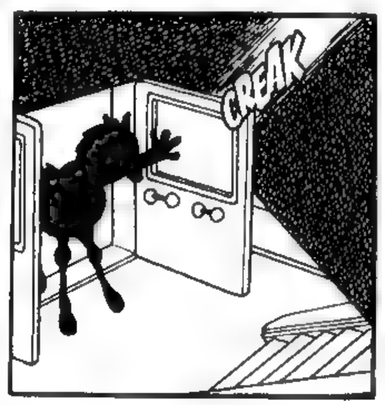
SOUND'S LIKE HE'S SEARCHING FOR ACORN...
ACORN!! WHERE ARE YOU?

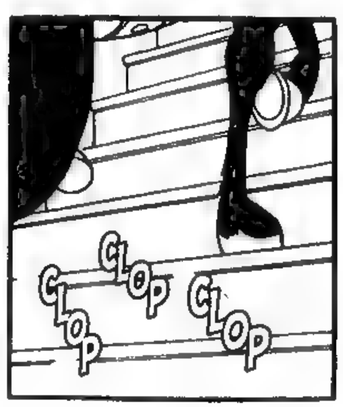
WHA?

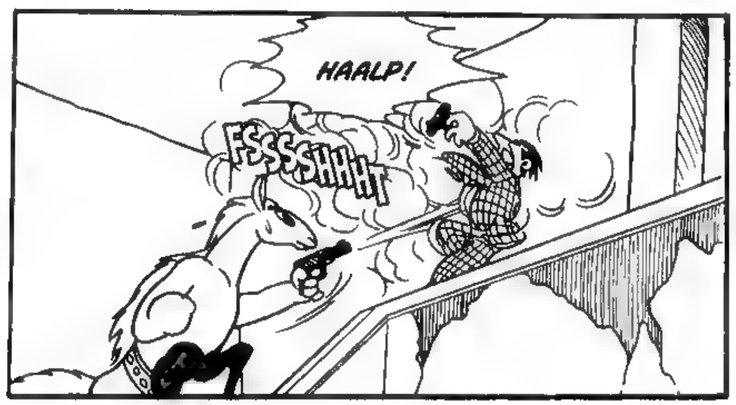
WHINNNEEEEE

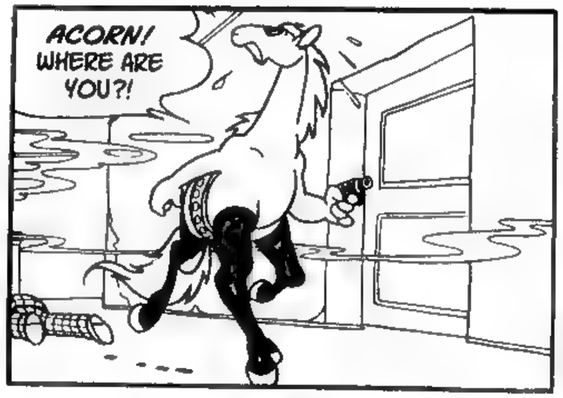
HE MUST'VE PICKED UP A SCENT!


HERE HE IS, GUYS!! WHAT A WEIRD HORSE....
SO THAT'S THE ANIMAL THE BOSS WANTS...


CREAK

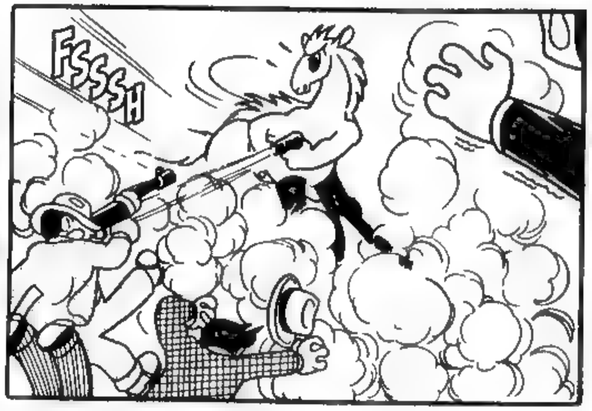

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP


HAALP!
FSSSSHHH

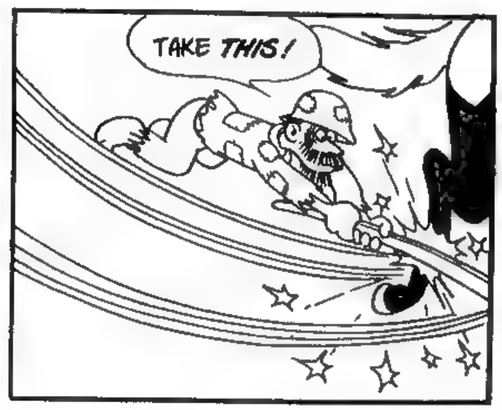

ACORN! WHERE ARE YOU?!

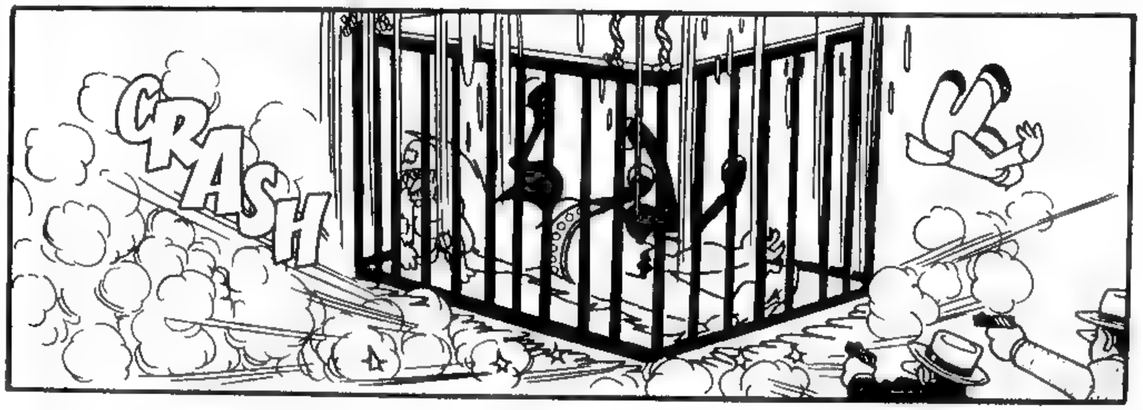
THIS CAN'T BE! YOU POOR THING!

WELL, WELL, WELL... WELCOME, HORSEY!
WHA?!


FSSSH

RATATATATATA


TAKE THIS!


CRASH

BOSS! YOU CAUGHT ME, TOO!!

HEH HEH HEH... SO THIS IS THE WEIRD HORSE I'VE HEARD ABOUT... *VERY* IMPRESSIVE!

WHINNNYYYY

YANK

YIKES! YOU SEE THE WAY HE BENT THAT IRON BAR WITH ONE HAND?!

BACK IN YOUR CAGE, MONSTER!

'ELLO? AKABOSHI? WE GOT THE HORSE. COME PICK IT UP AS SOON AS YOU CAN...

KER-MASH

WHA?! WHO'RE YOU?!

RATAT ATATATA

IT'S A *ROBOT!*

SMASH

HALP! HAALP!!

WHOOPS-A-DAISY!

DON'T WORRY, ACORN! IT'S ME! I'M HERE TO HELP YOU!

FIRST, TO CONK THIS CONCRETE....

...AND GET YOU OUT OF THIS MESS!

OWW!... IT HURTS...

ACORN! IT'S ME, OVER *HERE!*

NUU!! NUU!

BOTH OF YOU ARE INJURED!

I'VE GOTTA GET YOU TO A HOSPITAL...

NO! I CAN'T LET HUMANS SEE ME!!

WE'LL TREAT YOU AT MY HOUSE, THEN!!

.....
.....

YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY, 'CUZ I'M NOT A HUMAN MYSELF...

RATS! JUST WHEN WE GET THE *HORSE*, THAT BLASTED ROBO-BOY STEALS IT AWAY!!

WE REALLY OUGHT TO CALL A DOCTOR...

NO... I WILL CURE HIM. I PROMISE. YOU ROBOTS MUST NOT CALL ANYONE...

BUT YOU'RE INJURED YOURSELF, NUU...

YES, BUT *MY* BODY WILL CURE ITSELF...

WHAT KIND OF HORSE ARE YOU REALLY, NUU?

WELL, SINCE YOU'RE ROBOTS, I KNOW YOU CAN KEEP A SECRET...

YOU MUST NEVER, EVER TELL ANYONE WHAT I AM ABOUT TO SAY, OR IT WILL CREATE HUGE PROBLEMS FOR US...

DON'T WORRY, NUU, MY LIPS ARE SEALED!

VERY WELL, THEN. IT'S TRUE THAT I AM NOT A HORSE, EVEN THOUGH I MAY LOOK LIKE ONE....

WE RESEMBLE EARTH'S HORSES, BUT WE ARE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LIFE FORM...

WE COME FROM THE CONSTELLATION, *PEGASUS* IN *OUTER SPACE!*

PEGASUS? HM. MAYBE THAT'S WHAT WE CALL A TENMA IN JAPANESE, OR A "HEAVEN HORSE"...

WHEN DID YOU GUYS COME HERE TO EARTH?

HA HA! LONG, LONG AGO, ASTRO BOY...

OVER 10,000 YEARS AGO...

"HUMANS WERE STILL PRIMITIVE SAVAGES THEN!"

"WE TAUGHT THE HUMANS MANY THINGS, LIKE HUNTING AND THE CALENDAR AND WRITING, AND WE BECAME FRIENDS WITH THEM."

"AS A RESULT, HUMANS BECAME MORE AND MORE CLEVER..."

HMM... COME TO THINK OF IT ....

...I THINK I READ ABOUT YOU IN ONE OF MY SCHOOL-BOOKS...

IT SAID SOMETHING ABOUT *HERCULES* AND *PERSEUS,* IN THE GREEK MYTHS, WHO ALSO BECAME FAMOUS WARRIORS AFTER BEING TAUGHT BY A HALF-HORSE, HALF-HUMAN CREATURE...

THAT IS RIGHT... AND *HUMAN CHILDREN* WERE ALWAYS OUR *SPECIAL FRIENDS* ...

"BUT EVENTUALLY, AS THE HUMANS BECAME SMARTER AND SMARTER, THEY STARTED TO HATE US..."

"THEY BEGAN TO AVOID MAKING FRIENDS WITH US, AND THEY STARTED TREATING US LIKE *FREAKS!*"

"THEY CAPTURED US, EXHIBITED US IN CAGES, AND EVEN *ATE* US SOMETIMES!"

"MANY OF US WERE CAUGHT, AND OUR POPULATION BEGAN TO PLUMMET IN NUMBER..."

"WE BECAME DISGUSTED WITH HUMANS AND RETURNED TO OUR HOME PLANET."

"STILL, SOME OF US WHO COULDN'T FORGET THE HUMAN CHILDREN WHO WERE OUR FRIENDS, DECIDED TO RETURN TO EARTH AFTER ALL..."

"JUST IN CASE, WE TOOK WITH US SPECIAL *GAS PISTOLS*, WHICH COULD BE USED ON HUMANS!"

"IF ANYONE SPOTTED US, THE GAS MADE SURE THEY FORGOT HAVING EVER SEEN US--THE HEAVEN-HORSES, THE *TENMA TRIBE!*"

"UP UNTIL NOW, THOSE OF US WHO RETURNED TO EARTH HAVE BEEN HIDING DEEP IN A *MOUNTAIN FORTRESS*. ONLY OCCASIONALLY DO WE COME DOWN TO WHERE PEOPLE LIVE..."

"THEN WE PLAY WITH A FEW CHILDREN AND HELP THEM GROW TO BE STRONG AND TO BE CLEVER..."

"I, TOO, ONCE DESCENDED TO A VALLEY AND SPOTTED A WONDERFUL BOY WORKING ON A RANCH..."

"I DISGUISED MYSELF AS AN ORDINARY HORSE..."

"I WENT UP TO HIM, AND WE QUICKLY BECAME FRIENDS..."

"THE BOY WAS *KURI-TARO*, OR *'ACORN'* ..."

"WE RAN AROUND THE HILLS AND FIELDS AND PLAYED TO OUR HEARTS CONTENT."

"GRADUALLY I BEGAN TO SHOW ACORN A VARIETY OF POWERS..."

BRING THE ROCK OVER HERE, ACORN...

"ACORN ATE WILD VEGETABLES AND DRANK FROM MOUNTAIN STREAMS AND DEVELOPED *SUPER-POWERS...*"

ACORN... THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN HIDING FROM YOU....

"I FINALLY TOLD HIM MY SECRET... BUT HE WAS FINE WITH IT..."

"STILL, ONE DAY HE TOLD ME THAT HE WAS MOVING TO TOKYO WITH HIS FAMILY. I WAS *SHOCKED!*"

WHA P!

"STUNNED INTO ACTION, I FLEW TO TOKYO TO SEARCH FOR HIM..."

I SHALL NEVER LEAVE HIM. HE IS WHAT I LIVE FOR NOW...

NOW I GET IT! SO YOU PLAN TO STAY IN TOKYO FOREVER NOW?

YES, I SHALL STAY BY ACORN...

WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, THEN, WOULD YOU MIND BECOMING FRIENDS WITH SOME *OTHER* KIDS, TOO?

DON'T WORRY, NUU... I'LL MAKE SURE EV'RY THING'S OKAY. I'LL HAVE ALL THE KIDS SWEAR TO KEEP YOUR SECRET, OKAY?

SO BASICALLY, GUYS, ASTRO'S GONNA INTRODUCE NUU TO US. AN' YOU'VE ALL GOTTA SWEAR YOU'LL NEVER MENTION HIM TO ANY ADULTS, OKAY?!

WE'LL NEVER MENTION HIM, EVEN IF OUR BELLY BUTTONS TURN INSIDE OUT!

YE$$IR!

THANKS, GUYS... THAT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER.

I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH ALL OF YOU...

FIRST OFF, I BROUGHT SOME SNACKS FOR YOU TO EAT...

DAIKON RADISHES, CARROTS, AND POTATOES, TOO...

}BLECH€... HE WANTS US TO EAT THAT STUFF *RAW*, SHIB!! DOES HE THINK WE'RE *HORSES*?

I HATE CARROTS! I *HATE* 'EM!

BUT LOOK AT ACORN! HE'S EATING 'EM!

NO RAW POTATOES FOR ME!!

HEY! YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUN AWAY!

OKAY, GUYS, NOW YOU CAN CHASE ME!

CATCH ME 'N YOU GET A SET OF BASEBALL STUFF!

YOU HEAR THAT? BASEBALL STUFF?!

YEAH! I'LL GO FER THAT!

CATCH 'IM!!

WHOOPS- A-DAISY!

I'LL GET 'IM! AND A BASE- BALL...

...GLOVE...

WOW... I'M EX- HAUSTED. I NEED WATER!

I'LL GO GET SOME FOR YOU, SHIB...

GOSH, AFTER GETTING *THAT* THIRSTY, EVEN THIS *DAIKON RADISH* TASTES PRETTY GOOD....

GEE, MOM... I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW *HUNGRY* I AM.

B...BUT YOU'VE HAD *TWELVE BOWLS* OF RICE ALREADY, KEN!

WONDER WHY ALL THE BOYS'RE EATING DAIKON RADISHES 'N CARROTS THESE DAYS?

MUST BE SOME WEIRD *FAD*...

WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE CHEWING ON, SON?

LOOKS LIKE RAW CARROTS!

OH, HI, DAD... I LEARNED THIS FROM A HORSE...

HM. FROM A *HORSE*, EH? HOW ODD. WHAT KIND OF HORSE?

HORSE? GOSH, DAD... I NEVER MENTIONED ANY HORSE...

I BET IT'S THE HORSE I'M LOOKING FOR! WHERE IS IT, BOY?!

TELL ME WHERE HE IS!!

I...DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, DAD.... AND BESIDES, I PROMISED NOT TO TELL!!

YOU HIDING SOMETHING FROM YOUR OWN *FATHER*, BOY?

B-BUT I... I *SWORE* I WOULDN'T TELL!

HMPH. IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT IT...

DON'T BOTHER COMING HOME!!

WHAT?!

B-BUT *DAD! WHY?* HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO ME?

TELL ME WHERE THE HORSE IS, AN' I'LL FORGIVE YOU EVERYTHING...

I'LL TELL.. I'LL *TELL*... JUST LEMME GO HOME...

THANKS FOR THE INFO, SON... NOW COME WITH ME TO THE COMPANY FOR A SECOND...

'ELLO? MIKAZUKI? I FOUND OUT WHERE THE HORSE IS... RIGHT... RIGHT...

IT'S AT *ASTRO BOY'S* HOUSE... WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

SO *THAT'S* WHERE HE IS, EH? THE *ROBOTS* 'VE BEEN SHELTERING HIM, HUH? JUST AS I *SUSPECTED*...

WELL DONE. THERE'S ALL KINDS OF WAYS TO CATCH HIM WITHOUT GETTING TOO ROUGH...

OKAY, GUYS... I WANT YOU TO CASE OUT ASTRO'S HOUSE....

YES SIR...

HOW COME WE ALWAYS GET STUCK WITH THE LOUSY JOBS...?

'CUZ WE'RE THE *HENCHMEN*, THAT'S WHY...

THERE'S ASTRO'S HOUSE...

ER, S'CUSE ME...

IT'S YER LOCAL UNWANTED SALESMAN...

ASTRO

SO, MA'AM... WE BADLY NEED YOU TO BUY SOMETHING, SEE?

YOU DO?

B...BUT AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO TELL US WHAT TO BUY?

WHOOPS! I FORGOT TO BRING THE PRODUCT!! HEH HEH...

A SALESMAN WITHOUT ANYTHING TO SELL? YOU *IDIOT!*

OKAY, NEXT!

MY TURN...

I OUGHTA BE ABLE TO DO BETTER...

YOO HOO... IT'S YOUR LOCAL SCRAP COLLECTOR...

=HMPH=... MY PARDNER DROPPED HIS *PIPE*...

HMM.... I SMELL *SMOKE* ...

YOW! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOUR PIPE WAS STILL *BURNING!!*

THE OTHER TWO WERE INCOMPETENT ....

I'LL BE ABLE TO SNEAK IN FOR SURE...

WOW! THERE'S THE HORSE!

MY OTHER FRIENDS LIVE ON A PLATEAU BEHIND MT. TOKACHI, IN HOKKAIDO...

WHEN YOU GUYS BECOME STRONGER, I'D LOVE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MY FRIENDS...

WHAT A MINUTE....

SOMEONE'S *SPYING* ON US!

UH OH...

V.OOOSH

YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE *GANG-STERS,* AREN'T YOU?!

AW, SHUCKS. HOW'D YOU KNOW?

HOW'D YOU KNOW WE WERE HERE? WHO TOLD YOU?!

I... I DUNNO NOTHIN'!

GONNA HAND ME OVER TO THE COPS? WELL, JUST *TRY!! HEH HEH.* I'LL TELL EVERYONE ABOUT THE *HORSE!*

IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL, WE'LL HAVE TO KEEP YOU HERE FOR AWHILE... LOCK HIM UP, ACORN!

RRRING

IS ASTRO BOY THERE? I NEED TO SPEAK TO HIM...

HELLO ?

HELLO?

ASTRO... YOU'VE GOT A HORSE IN YOUR HOUSE, DON'T YOU?

WHO ARE YOU? WHERE'D YOU HEAR THAT ?

HEH HEH... THAT PUNK YOU CAUGHT IS ONE OF MY HENCH-MEN... AND IF YOU DON'T HAND OVER THE HORSE, I'LL BLAB ABOUT IT TO THE PAPERS!

WE'VE GOT A REAL PROBLEM, GUYS. IF THE PAPERS WRITE ANYTHING ABOUT NUU, THERE'LL BE NO END TO IT...

I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS, SO THE BEST THING'S FOR ME TO RETURN TO THE MOUNTAINS.

NO! NUU! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

YEAH! NO WAY! WE'LL PROTECT YOU *HERE!*

... ...

WE CAN'T HAND NUU OVER TO ANY ADULTS!

HEH HEH... JUST WAIT...

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT, IN A SUPER SPECIAL DELUXE EDITION OF THE RED STAR WEEKLY!

GET YOUR RED STAR WEEKLY HERE, FOLKS!

A STRANGE, APPARENTLY ALIEN, HORSE HAS APPEARED IN TOKYO...

...AND IT HAS BEEN HIDING AT ASTRO BOY'S HOUSE....

GOSH, ASTRO... LOOK AT THE CROWD OUTSIDE....

HEY! SHOW US THE HORSE!

HOW 'BOUT THAT? TV AND NEWSPAPERS 'RE GREAT FOR ADVERTISING!

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

'BOUT A HORSE, OF COURSE...

REALLY? WHAT KIND OF HORSE?

SHOW US THE HORSE! SHOW US THE HORSE! ASTRO, YOU STINK! SHOW US THE HORSE!

A CROWD ESTIMATED TO BE OVER ONE THOUSAND IS NOW IN FRONT OF ASTRO BOY'S HOUSE!

THERE'S A SEAT OPEN HERE...

IF IT'S A RACE HORSE, *I'M* THE MAN TO TALK TO!

ACTUALLY, I'M FROM THE *ZOO*...

YAY! YAY! YAY!

NO SIGN OF A HORSE YET, FOLKS...

HEY! CHECK OUT THE CROWD OF GAWKERS!

THE CROWD IS STARTING TO SCREAM IN EXCITEMENT...

WHAT DO YOU SAY, ASTRO? 'BOUT TIME TO PUT UP AND HAND OVER THE HORSE, NO?

DAD! I KNOW IT'S YOU! IT'S YOUR SON HERE! LISTEN, YOU'RE NOT BEING FAIR TO NUU!

SO *THAT'S* WHERE YOU ARE, SON.... WELL, TELL ASTRO BOY TO HAND OVER THE HORSE!

YAY!

SHOW US THE HORSE! HEY!

B-BUT DAD! I'M ON *NUU'S* SIDE!! I'D DIE IF I HAD TO HAND HIM OVER!

LISTEN, SON... YOUR DAD CAN BECOME *REAL FAMOUS* WITH THAT HORSE!

DAD! WHY CAN'T YOU UNDER-STAND ?!!

GET THIS STRAIGHT, SIR.... NO MATTER HOW BIG AND NOISY THE CROWD OUTSIDE, WE'RE NOT GONNA HAND OVER THE HORSE! GOT IT?

LISTEN, KID... YOU REALLY THINK ANY ADULT'S NOT GONNA BE INTERESTED IN A HORSE LIKE THAT?

HEH HEH HEH... THAT'S ASTRO ON THE ROOF...

BRING OUT THE HORSE, ASTRO! WE WANNA SEE HIM!

YAY! YAY! YAY!

YAY! HEY! GIVE US THE HORSE!

HEY, WHERE'S HE GOING?

THAT IDIOT ROBOT!

HEH HEH HEH.... WHAT A HOOPLA, AND THE MORE THE MERRIER! I CAN SEE MY *CASH REGISTERS RINGING!*

WELL, FOLKS.... THE CROWD'S READY TO CHARGE INTO THE HOUSE IN THEIR EAGERNESS TO SEE THE HORSE, BUT ASTRO BOY JUST TOOK OFF AND LEFT THEM BEHIND!

LET'S GO!!

GET THE HORSE! YEAH! YEAH!

I CAN'T STAND THIS! LET'S *CHARGE* THE HOUSE!

YEAH! WE'LL *BREAK* IN!

LET'S HAUL OUT THE HORSE! TAKE 'IM TO THE ZOO!

OW! OWW OWW!!

FOLKS, WE'VE GOT A REAL *RIOT* ON OUR HANDS!

SMASH THE WINDOWS! STORM THE HOUSE!

SMASH

CRASH

SMASH

WE'LL CHARGE IN FROM THE FRONT *AND* BACK AND CUT 'EM OFF!

WE'LL TRAP 'EM INSIDE!!

WE'VE GOTTA PROTECT ASTRO'S HOUSE FROM THE RIOTERS, MEN! PUSH 'EM BACK!

YIKES! HE'S SHOOTING *GAS* AT US!

FSSSHT

YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE!!

ESSSHTT

INSPECTOR NAKAMURA! DON'T LET THE CROWD DESTROY MY HOUSE!

HEAR THAT MEN? MAKE SURE YOU TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF ON ENTERING!

IT'S ME, DAD!

I BROUGHT THE *POLICE!*

ASTRO! NUU SPRAYED THE CROWD WITH GAS AND ESCAPED!

GAS? POISON GAS?

EVERYONE'S COLLAPSED!

HUMAN GROWNUPS SURE ARE STUPID! THEY SHOULD'VE *KNOWN* THIS'D HAPPEN!

EVEN INSPECTOR NAKAMURA'S OUT COLD!

UNGHH!

...

NUU ESCAPED, INSPECTOR! EVERYONE ELSE COLLAPSED, LIKE YOU...

WHAT'S *NUU,* ASTRO?

HE'S A *HORSE,* INSPECTOR! I THOUGHT I EXPLAINED IT TO YOU!

A HORSE? WHADDAYOU MEAN? FUNNY, I CAN'T REMEMBER A *THING*...

UH OH... THE COPS'RE HERE...

EVERYONE HERE'S ORDERED TO DISPERSE IMMEDIATELY!

I'VE GOTTA FIND NUU FAST!

THERE HE IS!!

NUU!

WOOOSH

NUU! *WAIT!* THE GROWNUPS HAVE ALL GONE AWAY!!

I'M GOING BACK TO HOKKAIDO, ASTRO! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO TOKYO!

B-BUT THINK HOW *DISAPPOINTED* ACORN 'N KEN 'N ALL THE OTHERS'LL BE...

I'M SORRY, ASTRO ...

NUU!!

SAYONARA ...

GOSH, JUST WHEN WE ALL BECAME FRIENDS WITH NUU...

...HE HAS TO GO BACK TO HOKKAIDO...

WHAT?! YOU LET THE HORSE GET AWAY? YOU STUPID INCOMPETENT BLUNDERING PEA-BRAINED *FOOLS!*

I STAKED THE FATE OF THE *RED STAR WEEKLY* ON CAPTURING THIS HORSE!!

SORRY, SIR, BUT WE DON'T REMEMBER A THING. WHAT HORSE ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHEN WE CAME TO, WE WERE TAKING A NAP IN FRONT OF ASTRO BOY'S HOUSE.

THIS HAPPENS TO EVERYONE WHO MEETS THAT HORSE!

THEY *ALL* FORGET WHAT HAPPENED!!

BUT *I* WANNA *KNOW* WHAT HAPPENED... WHAT'D THE HORSE *DO* TO YOU!?

THIS MIKAZUKI? IT'S ME, AKABOSHI... WHAT? *HMM...*

HOKKAIDO? YOU SURE? WHO TOLD YOU?

SO THE BLASTED HORSE ESCAPED TO HOKKAIDO!

MY INSIDE SOURCE TELLS ME HE RAN OFF SOMEWHERE NEAR MT. TOKACHI... *HEH HEH...* GOOD FOOTWORK, NO?

YEAH, HOW'D YOU FIND OUT?

I DON'T CARE WHETHER HE WENT TO MT. TOKACHI OR HABOMAI... I'LL TRACK HIM DOWN!

EASY! WE JUST TURNED THE SCREWS ON *OSAMU TEZUKA...*

LISTEN, MIKAZUKI! I'VE *GOT* TO GO THERE...

I'VE *GOT* TO CATCH THAT HORSE, OR I'LL *LOSE FACE!*

MT. TOKACHI, HOKKAIDO

YOU'RE A STUBBORN MAN, MR. AKABOSHI, TO WANT THE HORSE THAT BAD...

BUT I CAN'T GIVE UP NOW! I'VE GOTTA CATCH HIM AND ANNOUNCE IT IN MY NEWSPAPER! I'VE JUST *GOT* TO!

WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR HIM AROUND HERE FOR TEN DAYS ALREADY... .

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF...

THOSE'RE FAINT *HOOF PRINTS!*

THAT'S GOTTA BE HIM. HE MUST BE IN THE AREA...

LOOK! HORSE HAIRS!

THERE! LOOK OVER THERE!

YOU'RE RIGHT! MUST BE FOUR OR FIVE OF 'EM...

HOKAY, MEN... WE'VE FOUND THE *CENTAUR FORTRESS!* PUT THE PLAN INTO ACTION!

WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?

IT'S MY MECHANIZED GANG....

I HAVE TO DO IS PUT OUT THE WORD, AND MY GANGSTERS ALL OVER JAPAN START RIOTING!

WE'LL DRIVE THE HORSES DOWN TO THE FOOTHILLS USING MISSILES, FLAME THROWERS, BAZOOKAS, AND ROBOTANKS!

UH OH.... THOSE'RE *HUMANS!*

WOW... YOU'RE RIGHT...

HOW'D THEY KNOW WHERE WE LIVE?

HORDES OF THEM ARE COMING UP HERE...

NO TIME FOR US TO FLEE! WE'LL HAVE TO *FIGHT!*

MAKE SURE WE DON'T KILL ANYONE... THAT'S OUR LAW, REMEMBER...

KA BOOMPH

VOOMPH

DEAR GOD, HERE'S PRAYING FOR A BULLSEYE!

KA VOO OSH

IF WE HIT ONE OF THE HORSES, IT'LL BE FRIED...

'NUFF TALK... KEEP FIRING TIL THE MOUNTAIN'S PULVERIZED!

'SEEMS AWFULLY *CRUEL*....

ONLY IN A MANGA WOULD A GANG LIKE THIS FIRE *ROCKETS!*

YOU FROM SAPPORO CITY? I'M FROM KUSHIRO...

THEY SAID WE'D BE PAID 1000 YEN A DAY... THAT'S WHY *I'M* HERE...

HEY! IT'S BIRD-LIME GOO!!

BLAST IT! THOSE HORSES'RE MAKING A JACKASS OUT OF ME!!

I'LL SHOW 'EM! *I'LL KILL 'EM ALL!!*

WAIT, MIKAZUKI! THAT'S NOT WHAT WE AGREED ON! WE'VE GOTTA TAKE 'EM ALIVE!!

HECK NO! THE REPUTATION OF MY GANG'S AT STAKE HERE ...

KA BOOOM

MODEL 10

UH OH... THE MISSILES WE SHOT ARE ALL BEING FIRED BACK AT US! *WATCH OUT!*

IF I CATCH A HORSE, I'M GONNA BUY A RANCH!

STOP, MIKAZUKI! YOU'LL KILL ALL THE HORSES!

SORRY, BUT THE ONLY WAY I'M GONNA REGAIN MY HONOR IS BY BLOWING 'EM UP!

WOW...

YOU'RE GETTING IN THE WAY, AKABOSHI!

HOKKAIDO HOBO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS, OVER HERE!

WITH ALL THESE PEOPLE HERE, WE OUGHTA CLEAN UP... WE OUGHTA GET AT LEAST A THOUSAND YEN IN HANDOUTS...

B-BUT YOU'VE GOTTA TAKE AT LEAST ONE OF 'EM ALIVE!!

NEVER! FIRE!!

BOOM BOOM BOOM KABOOOM BAM RUMBLE

BOOM RUMBLE RUMBLE

MIKAZUKI! WHY YOU... I SPENT ALL THIS TIME AND ENERGY TO GET ONE OF THESE HORSES *ALIVE* AND TO SCOOP IN IT MY NEWSPAPER!

LET 'EM HAVE IT, MEN!

GABO-GAAAN

SHAD-DUP, AKAB-OSHI!

WHY YOU....

Y-YOU....

THAT'S MT. TOKACHI... WHERE *NUU* LIVES!!

WHA?! WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE'S NUU?

NUU!!

WH-WHAT HAPPENED?!

STOP!

LAUNCH *MORE* MISSILES!

WATCH OUT, ASTRO! YOU'LL BE *HIT*!!

STAND BACK!!

ROAR

SCREEE

KAPHOONK

BOOM

KABOOOOM

TIME FOR A RETURN TRIP!

UH OH... THE ROBOTS ARE ATTACKING NEXT, ASTRO!

LEAVE THEM TO ME!

GA GA BEEEP

I *WON'T* LET YOU PASS!!

GAAN GON

YOU GUYS AREN'T REAL ROBOTS! YOU'RE *FAKES!*

OWWW OWWW!!

AIEEE!

THESE ROBO-SUITS'RE CHEAPOS!

NAW... IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND! ASTRO'S TOO WELL-MADE...

PANT GASP PANT PUFF

BLAST IT! IT'S ALL UP TO *ME* NOW!

ASTRO ...

IF THEY KEEP THIS UP, THEY'LL JUST RUIN THIS BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAIN...

LET'S GO BACK TO TOKYO, NUU!

NO, ASTRO... WE'VE DECIDED TO GO BACK TO OUR *OWN* PLANET...

YOUR *OWN PLANET?*

RIGHT. TO OUR *HOME* ...

OPEN MOUNTAIN! REVEAL ROCKET!

RUMBLE RRUMBLE

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

WOW...

THIS IS THE ROCKET IN WHICH OUR ANCESTORS CAME TO EARTH LONG AGO. WE'VE KEPT IT HIDDEN IN THE MOUNTAINS ALL THIS TIME...

HURRY, NUU! GET ON BOARD!

NUU! YOU'RE NOT REALLY LEAVING, ARE YOU?

EVERYONE WILL BE SO DISAP-POINTED!

DO YOU REALLY HATE HUMANS THAT MUCH, NUU?

NO, OF COURSE I LIKE THEM... ESPECIALLY THE *CHILDREN...*

BUT AS LONG AS *ADULTS* ACT THIS WAY...

...WE CAN'T SAFELY PLAY WITH THE KIDS...

YOU'VE GOTTA BELIEVE ME, NUU! HUMAN'S REALLY AREN'T SO BAD! *HONEST!!*

WHEE-EEE!
ZAP ZAP
ZAP ZAP
YOU MONSTER!!
WHAT'VE YOU DONE?!!
NUU... YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT... I KNOW YOU WILL...
THANKS, ASTRO... BUT HE GOT ME IN MY WEAK SPOT... I'M FINISHED...
HERE'S THE MAN WHO DID IT, NUU... TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WITH HIM...
GIVE HIM A TASTE OF THE GAS...
YOU FIRE IT, ASTRO...
ACK! ....
ARGH ....
ARGH... THIS IS TERRIBLE!
HALP HALP HALP!
ONCE HE BREATHES IT IN, HE'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT US...
SO YOU'LL LET HIM GO LIKE THAT...
GOSH, NUU... YOU GUYS'RE AWFULLY KIND HEARTED...
FAREWELL, ASTRO... I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU...
...SAY GOODBYE TO ACORN AND HIS PALS FOR ME...

IF HUMAN ADULTS EVER DEVELOP PURER HEARTS, LIKE HUMAN CHILDREN, I MIGHT COME BACK...
RUMBLE ROAR
WOOOOSH
NUU!
G'BYE, NUUU!

ONE WEEK LATER, IN TOKYO...
NUU SAID TO SAY G'BYE TO YOU, ACORN...
NUU? WHO'S THAT?
WHAT? DON'T YOU REMEMBER? THE CENTAUR? THE HEAVEN HORSES? THE TENMA TRIBE?
TENMA? ONLY TENMA I'VE EVER HEARD OF IS A SCIENTIST ...
I GET IT.... YOU INHALED SOME OF THAT GAS, TOO! HEH HEH... I FORGOT ABOUT THAT...
I KNOW... I'LL SHOW YOU THIS...
THIS HELP YOU REMEM-BER?
HMM... DOES LOOK KINDA FAMILIAR ...
YOU LIKE CARROTS, RIGHT?
I DID BEFORE...
GREEK MYTHS
...BUT NOT MUCH ANYMORE...
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, ASTRO?
AH, JUST FORGET IT...
ACORN 'N ALL THE GUYS'VE ALL FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU, NUU, BUT I NEVER WILL!!
...'N I'LL NEVER FORGET WHAT YOU SAID, THAT SOMEDAY YOU MIGHT COME BACK!!

GERNICA

First appeared in the special expanded New Year's edition of *Shonen* magazine.

THE GERNICA HAVE COME WITHIN 30 MILES OF TOKYO! ALL CITIZENS ARE ADVISED TO TAKE SHELTER UNDERGROUND! REPEAT: THE GERNICA ARE ONLY 30 MILES AWAY!

HERE COMES THE AIR FORCE!

LOOKS LIKE OUR GROUND FORCES' NAPALM SHELLS AND MAG-GUNS'VE BEEN USELESS! THERE'S JUST TOO MANY GERNICA!

THIS IS TERRIBLE! IN ONLY TWO DAYS THE GERNICA HAVE INCREASED FROM FIVE TO THREE THOUSAND!

ROAR

ROAR

ROAR

KABOOM BOOM

BOOM BLAM

SPLOOSH

ROAR

NOTHING'S WORKING!!

THE MONSTERS'RE APPROACHING HACHIOJI CITY! HAJIOJI CITY IS NOW IN DANGER!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, ASTRO! EVEN YOU CAN'T TAKE ON THE GERNICA!

HELP THE KIDS EVACUATE, ASTRO! PROTECT 'EM!

NO, TEACHER! I'VE GOTTA FIGHT THE GER-NICA!

HERE THEY COME !!!

37TH ROBOT DIVISION! CHARGE!!

GAA GAAA GAAA GAA

SPLOOSH

FWWWT

ASTRO!! HAALP!

GRAAAR

IT'S NO USE! I'M *FINISHED!* TOKYO'S GONNA BE DESTROYED BY THE GERNICA!

A WEEK AGO, I NEVER WOULD'VE IMAGINED THIS!

"ONLY A WEEK AGO, I WAS SKIING IN OKUTANZAWA WITH MY STUDENTS..."

"YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS RECKLESS, AND ONE OF THE BOYS GOT OVER HIS HEAD IN THE SNOW THAT YEAR..."

KEEP DIGGING, TEACHER! WE'LL FIND HIM!

FUNNY HOW MOST OF THE PEOPLE WE'VE FOUND THIS YEAR'VE BEEN *DRIED UP LIKE MUMMIES...*

MR. MU-STACHIO! I FOUND THE BOY! HE'S STILL *ALIVE!*

THANK *HEAVENS!* BUT WE'VE GOTTA TREAT HIM FAST! MUST BE AN EMERGENCY HUT WE CAN TAKE HIM TO...

NO HUT AROUND HERE, BUT THERE'S A BUILDING BY THE DAM...

HE'S DOING A LOT BETTER NOW! THANKS FOR LETTING US SHELTER HERE, SIR!

THINK NOTHING OF IT! THIS HOT MEAT DISH'LL MAKE HIM FEEL BETTER! *HA HA HA HA!*

HMM. WHAT IS THIS DISH, ANYWAY? TASTES GOOD, BUT IT'S KIND OF *UNUSUAL...*

HA HA! GUESS!

MUST BE LAMB!

MAYBE IT'S WILD BOAR...

MONKEY MEAT?

}GAG{ ...

YOU'RE ALL WRONG! IT'S *SNAIL* MEAT!

DID YOU SAY *"SNAIL MEAT"* ?!

SURE. IT'S A SPECIAL TYPE OF MUTANT SNAIL THAT I CREATED DURING MY RESEARCH SOME 25 YEARS AGO. BIG AS OXEN! I CALL 'EM *GERNICA!*

BASICALLY, I DISCOVERED THERE WERE *UNUSUALLY* LARGE SNAILS GROWING NEAR THE DAM. I DECIDED TO ASSIST THEIR EVOLUTION AND TO CREATE GIANT EDIBLE SNAILS.... WHAT DO YOU THINK? NOT BAD, EH? PERFECT FOR A COUNTRY LIKE *JAPAN* WITH SUCH LIMITED *FOOD RESOURCES...*

B-BUT WHAT DO THESE MONSTER SNAILS *EAT?*

OH, THEY ONLY NEED WATER AND A LITTLE FOOD. THEY'RE *REAL FRIENDLY,* 'N I LET 'EM ROAM AROUND ON THE SNOW-COVERED SLOPES HERE...

YOU *WHAT?!* YOU LET 'EM *ROAM FREE?!*

HEY! THERE'S A *BUTTON* THERE! AND IT'S GOT *MY SCHOOL EMBLEM* ON IT!

I GET IT! THIS GIANT SNAIL MUST'VE ATTACKED MY STUDENT WHO GOT LOST! *THAT'S* WHY HE WAS SO DEHYDRATED...

W-WAIT A MINUTE! WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'VE GOT NO PROOF OF THAT!!

LISTEN, JUST DON'T LET THOSE MONSTER ROAM FREE, OKAY? IT'S *DANGEROUS!*

DANGEROUS? *HA HA HA!* DON'T YOU KNOW? SNAILS ARE AMONG THE MOST *GENTLE* CREATURES ON EARTH!

NO! THEY'LL KILL PEOPLE BY SUCKING THE WATER OUT OF 'EM!

I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT YOUR IMAGINATION'S FAR TOO VIVID!

I'M GOING TO BREED THESE SNAILS, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS. THEN I'LL GET EVERYONE IN JAPAN TO EAT THEIR MEAT!

BUT THE VERY NEXT DAY, A TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED...

"THE SCIENTIST MET THE SAME FATE AS PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS IN THE AREA!"

THERE'S NO MORE WATER IN THE DAM!

THOSE MONSTER SNAILS MUST'VE SUCKED UP EVERY LAST DROP!!

THESE'RE *GERNICA* TRACKS! THEY LOOK LIKE *TIRE TRACKS!*

"UNABLE TO WITHSTAND THE COLD, THE GERNICA EVENTUALLY BEGAN MIGRATING TO LOWER AND LOWER GROUND..."

...WHICH BRINGS US TO THE PRESENT...

TEACHER! TEACHER!

THANK GOD *YOU'RE* OKAY, ASTRO...

DON'T WORRY, I'LL FREE YOU, TEACHER! THE GERNICA HAVE GONE THROUGH THIS VILLAGE 'N ARE SWARMING AROUND TACHIKAWA CITY...

WOW... LOOK HOW THEY'VE FLATTENED THE GROUND...

WHAT'LL WE DO, TEACHER?

I DUNNO... THEY'RE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT TO TOKYO NOW... 'N WE CAN'T USE POISON GAS THERE...

HEH HEH... HAH HAH... HAH HAH HAH....

THIS IS REALLY *FUNNY,* COME TO THINK OF IT. MAN MAKES SNAILS FOR FOOD, AND THE SNAILS TURN MAN INTO FOOD....

WE BRING YOU AN EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT. THE CITY OF TACHIKAWA HAS BEEN WIPED OUT! THE GERNICA ARE NOW WITHIN TWELVE MILES OF TOKYO...

TEACHER, I'VE BEEN THINKING OF SOMETHING... DO YOU MIND IF I TRY IT?

DO WHATEVER YOU CAN, ASTRO... I'LL TAKE RESPONSI-BILITY... BUT EVEN YOU PROB'LY CAN'T DO ANYTHING NOW...

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

PHEW...

THAT WON'T DO... I TOLD YOU!

B-BUT THERE'S NO TIME... *PLEASE*, YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME TRY...

ASTRO?! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

I CAUGHT HIM TRYING TO SNEAK INTO THE FOOD WAREHOUSES IN TOKYO, SIR...

JUST LET ME TRY SOMETHING, INSPECTOR, *PLEASE!* MR. MUSTACHIO SAID HE'D TAKE FULL RESPONSI-BILITY!

MUSTA-CHIO? WELL... IN THAT CASE... GO AHEAD.

FOOD WAREHOUSE XII

FOOD WAREHOUSE XIII

ONLY ONE MORE MILE, FOLKS, BEFORE THEY ENTER MITAKA CITY HERE! FIGHTER PLANES ARE FLYING OVERHEAD, AND, WAIT, THERE'S A *ROBOT*, TOO!

IT APPEARS TO BE *CARRYING* SOMETHING... SOMETHING EXTREMELY *LARGE!*

A STRANGE WHITE POWDER'S FALLING FROM THE SKY... DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE SNOW, FOLKS... IT'S A MYSTERY... WAIT, SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO THE MONSTER SNAILS!

THE SNAILS ARE IN AGONY! THEY'RE LOSING THEIR COORDINATION! THIS IS A *SURPRISE!* A *REAL SURPRISE*, FOLKS!

ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP

WHAT IS THAT WHITE STUFF?

WHO CARES! KEEP FIRING! NOW'S OUR CHANCE!!

THE GERNICA ARE DYING, ONE-BY-ONE, BEFORE OUR EYES!

A *MIRACLE* IS OCCURRING, FOLKS! THE AUTHORITIES'RE NOW TRYING TO IDENTIFY THAT STRANGE WHITE SUBSTANCE!

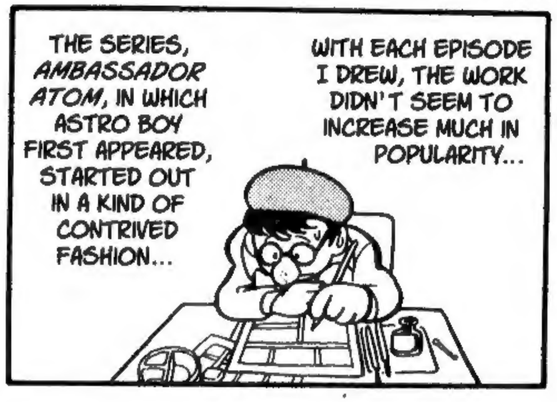
WE HAVE AN ANSWER! WE HAVE ISOLATED THE POWDER'S COMPONENTS! WHILE WE WERE TRYING TO STOP THE GERNICA USING POISON GAS, FLAME THROWERS, AND MAG-CANNONS...

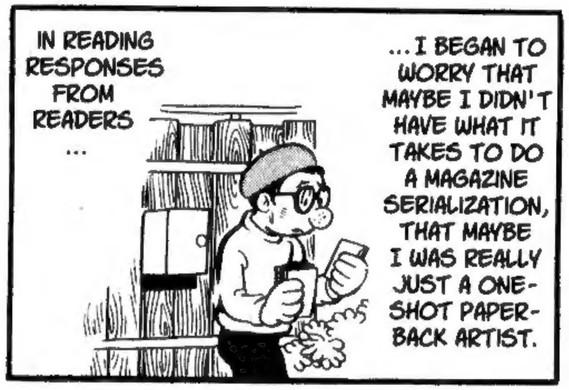
...THE ROBOT USED A MUCH MORE PRIMITIVE TECHNOLOGY TO DESTROY THEM!

HE USED SALT!

ASTRO BOY'S ORIGINS AND HISTORY

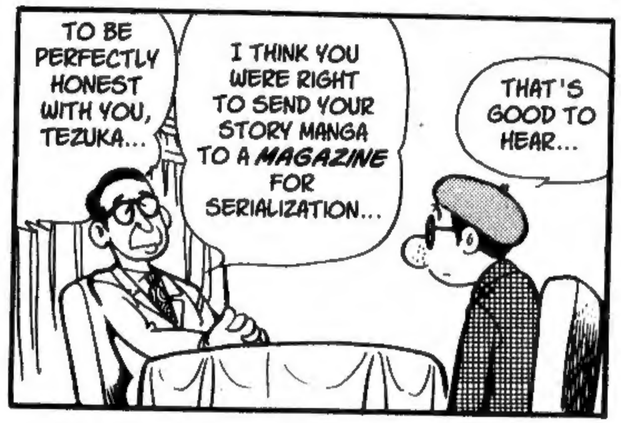
PART 2

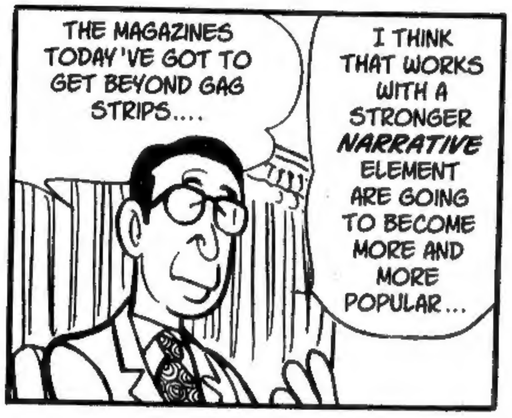

THE SERIES, AMBASSADOR ATOM, IN WHICH ASTRO BOY FIRST APPEARED, STARTED OUT IN A KIND OF CONTRIVED FASHION...
WITH EACH EPISODE I DREW, THE WORK DIDN'T SEEM TO INCREASE MUCH IN POPULARITY...

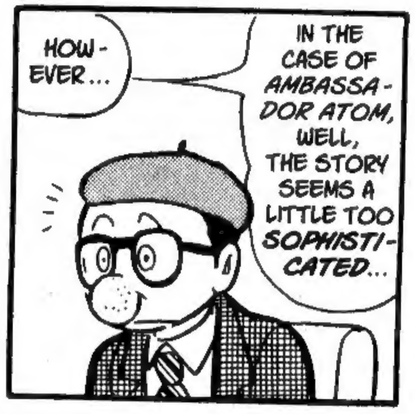

IN READING RESPONSES FROM READERS ...
...I BEGAN TO WORRY THAT MAYBE I DIDN'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO DO A MAGAZINE SERIALIZATION, THAT MAYBE I WAS REALLY JUST A ONE-SHOT PAPER-BACK ARTIST.

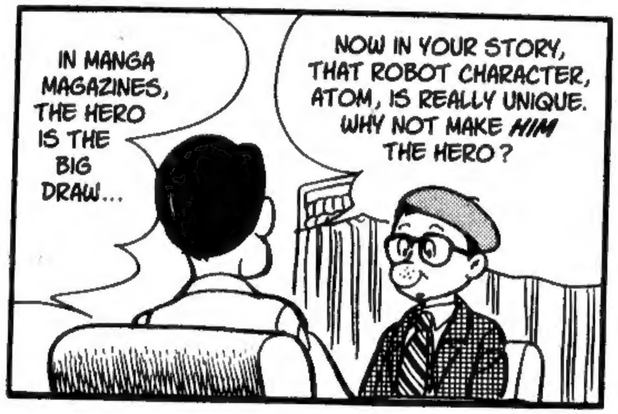
BUT BECAUSE I WAS DOING MORE MAGAZINE SERIALIZ-ATIONS LIKE ASTRO BOY, JUNGLE EMPEROR, AND BIBI-CHAN...
... I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO SPEND ON THE PAPERBACK BOOKS I WAS DOING, LIKE FUTURE WORLD, CRIME AND PUNISH-IMENT, AND SO FORTH...

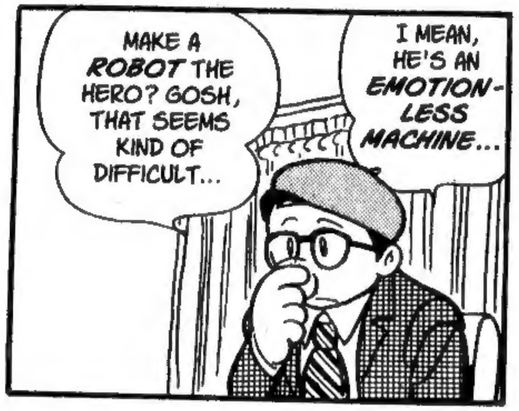
I CREATED THE NEW YEAR'S CARD AT RIGHT IN 1952. IT SHOWS THE CHARACTERS FROM THE FOLLOWING WORKS:
[1+2] *BIBICHAN* ("LITTLE BIBI," THEN SERIALIZED IN *OMOSHIRO BOOK*).
[3+4] *JUNGLE EMPEROR* (KNOWN AS *"KIMBA, THE WHITE LION"* IN AMERICA, SERIALIZED IN *MANGA SHONEN*)
[5+6] *DEKOBOKO SERIES* ("UNEVEN SERIES" N *MANGA TO YOMIMONO*)
[7] *SABOTEN-KUN* ("CACTUS KID," IN *SHONEN GAHO*)
[8] *BOKU NO SONGOKU* ("MY MONKEY KING," THEN SCHEDULED FOR SERIALIZATION IN *MANGA-O*).
[9] *BOKENKYO JIDAI* ("THE AGE OF ADVENTURES," IN *BOKEN-O*).
[10+11] *AMBASSADOR ATOM*. NOTE THAT THE CHARACTER ATOM (OR ASTRO), DOESN'T APPEAR ANYWHERE. IN OTHER WORDS, IN 1952 ASTRO WAS STILL A BIT-PART PLAYER!

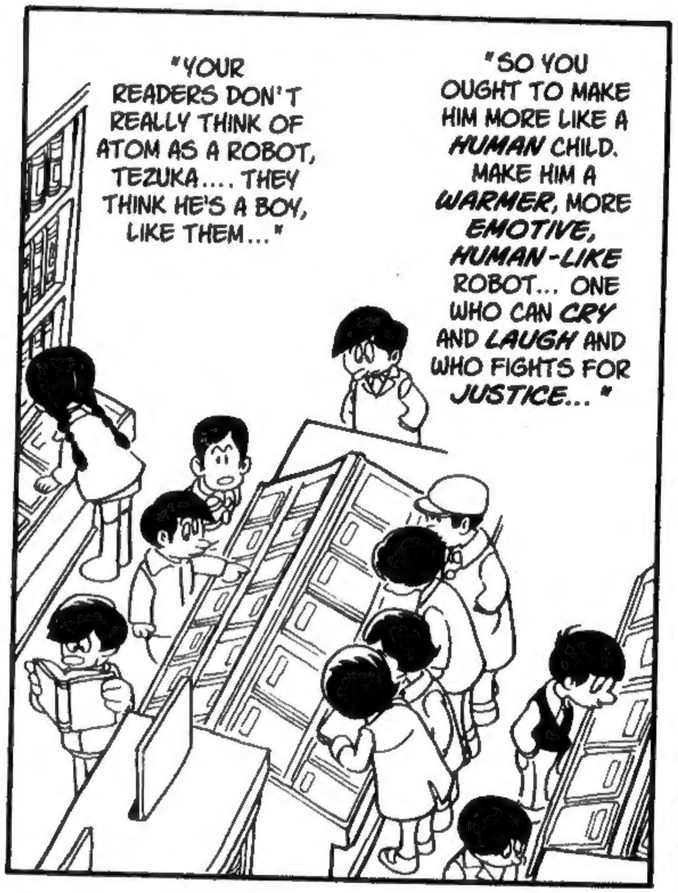

TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST WITH YOU, TEZUKA...
I THINK YOU WERE RIGHT TO SEND YOUR STORY MANGA TO A MAGAZINE FOR SERIALIZATION...
THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR...

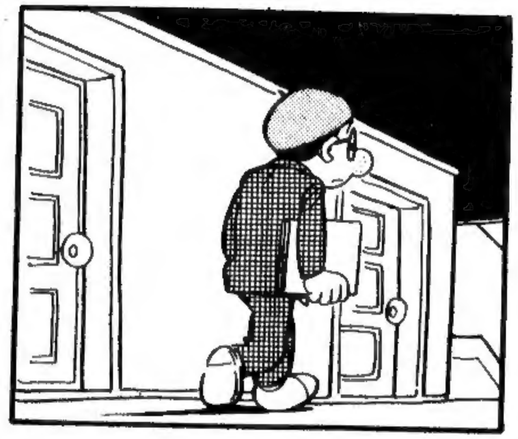

THE MAGAZINES TODAY'VE GOT TO GET BEYOND GAG STRIPS....
I THINK THAT WORKS WITH A STRONGER NARRATIVE ELEMENT ARE GOING TO BECOME MORE AND MORE POPULAR...

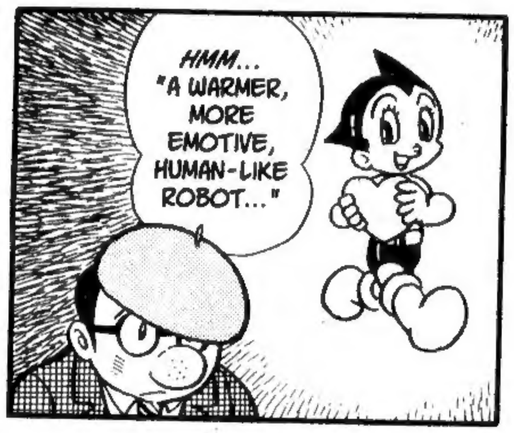


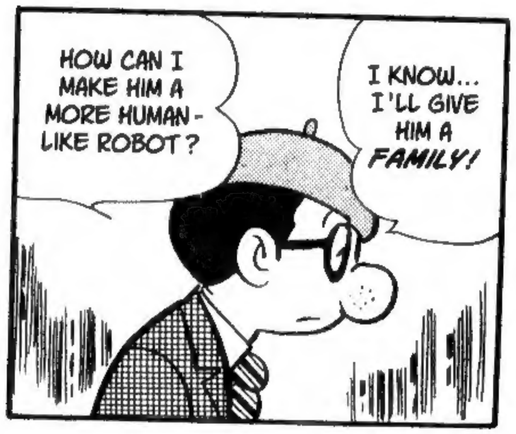

IN MANGA MAGAZINES, THE HERO IS THE BIG DRAW...
NOW IN YOUR STORY, THAT ROBOT CHARACTER, ATOM, IS REALLY UNIQUE. WHY NOT MAKE HIM THE HERO?

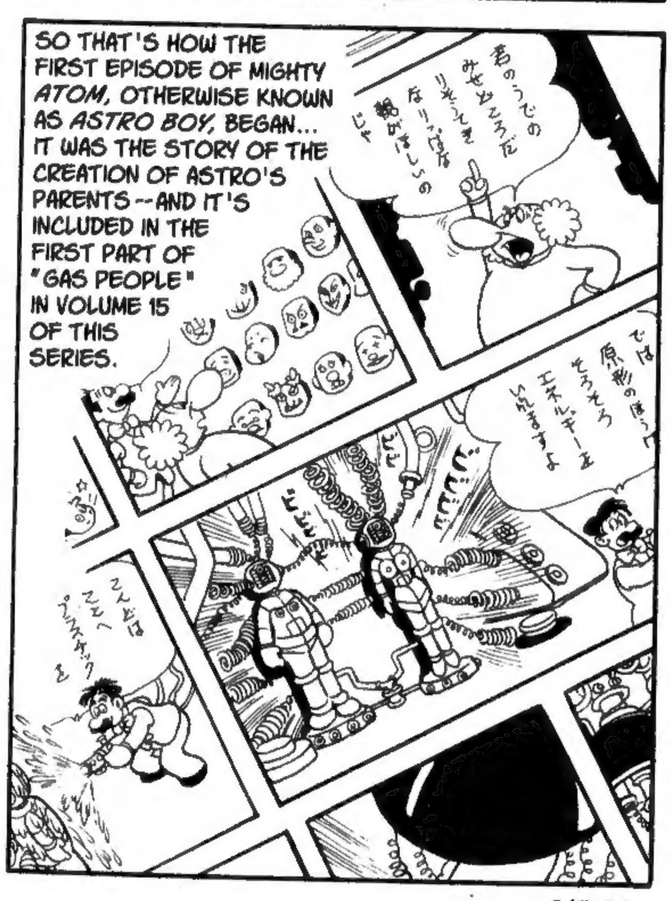


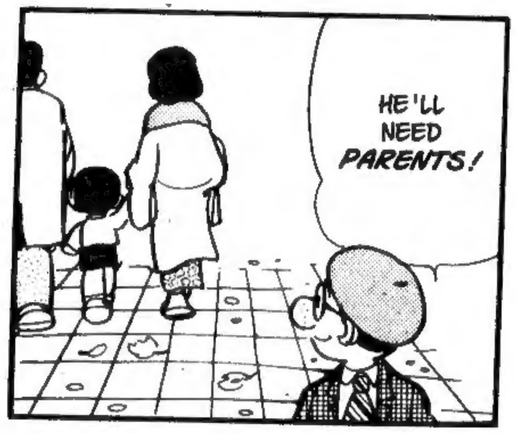

"YOUR READERS DON'T REALLY THINK OF ATOM AS A ROBOT, TEZUKA.... THEY THINK HE'S A BOY, LIKE THEM..."
"SO YOU OUGHT TO MAKE HIM MORE LIKE A HUMAN CHILD. MAKE HIM A WARMER, MORE EMOTIVE, HUMAN-LIKE ROBOT... ONE WHO CAN CRY AND LAUGH AND WHO FIGHTS FOR JUSTICE..."








SO THAT'S HOW THE FIRST EPISODE OF MIGHTY ATOM, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ASTRO BOY, BEGAN... IT WAS THE STORY OF THE CREATION OF ASTRO'S PARENTS--AND IT'S INCLUDED IN THE FIRST PART OF "GAS PEOPLE" IN VOLUME 15 OF THIS SERIES.



THE END

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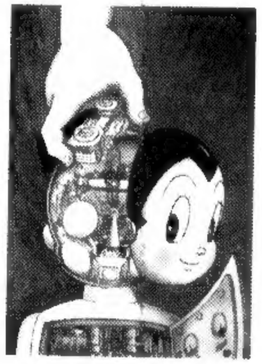
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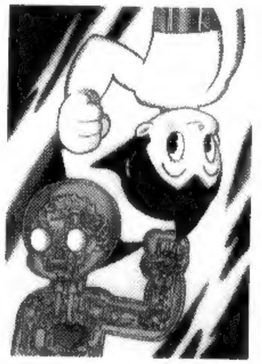
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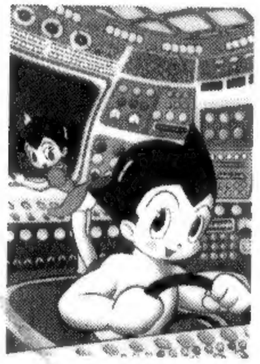
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